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# HISTORY

OF

# WINDHAM COUNTY,

# CONNECTICUT.

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BY ELLEN D. LARNED.

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"If, when we lay down our pen, we cannot say in the sight of God, 'upon strict examination, I have not knowingly written anything that is not true' . . . . then study and literature render us unrighteous and sinful."—*Niebuhr*.

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1600-1760.

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## PREFACE.

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Town, church and court records, the archives of Connecticut, Massachusetts and Rhode Island, standard histories, the collections of many Historical Societies, unpublished manuscripts, private diaries and letters, and such local traditions as could be substantiated, have furnished the material for this work. The genealogical investigations of Mr. William L. Weaver of Willimantic, the ecclesiastical researches of Rev. Robert C. Learned, and general facts, gathered and preserved by Rev. Daniel Hunt of Pomfret—former residents of Windham County, all now deceased—have been of great service. Aboriginal items and translations of Indian names have been kindly given by Dr. J. Hammond Trumbull. No pains have been spared in sifting, collating and arranging this mass of material. Statements conflicting with those in previous histories, have been very carefully considered, and are only made upon positive evidence.

The numerous extracts from records and ancient documents are believed to be faithful transcripts of the originals, save corrections in spelling and the occasional supply of words when needful. Dates are copied as written. Those prior to September, 1752, are therefore in *old style*, and it will be necessary to add *eleven* days to any date to bring it in correspondence with the same day of the month at the present time. Celebrators of coming bicentennials will need to pay especial heed to this point.

The map of Ancient Windham includes all the territory ever

pertaining to Windham County, and original bounds and land-grants, so far as they could be identified. The plat of the Mashamoquet is a fac-simile of the original, which is preserved among the town records of Pomfret. The reader will observe that it reverses the points of compass.

The history of towns afterward incorporated into other counties, is not here given. A second volume, to be published, it is hoped, within two years, will bring the History of Windham County to the latest date.

THOMPSON, *Nov.* 20, 1874.

E. D. L.

SEE INSIDE BACK COVER FOR MAP.



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## ABORIGINAL GLEANINGS.

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IN 1726, ten towns in the northeast corner of Connecticut, previously included in the counties of Hartford and New London, were erected into the County of Windham. Union and Woodstock were subsequently added; Mansfield, Coventry, Lebanon, Union and Columbia taken away; and several of the original towns divided. Sixteen towns—Woodstock, Thompson, Putnam, Pomfret, Brooklyn, Killingly, Sterling, Plainfield, Canterbury, Eastford, Ashford, Chaplin, Hampton, Windham, Scotland and Voluntown—form the present WINDHAM COUNTY. Its average length is about twenty-six miles; its breadth, nearly nineteen. Its area comprises a little less than five hundred and fifty-three square miles.

The greater part of this tract of country, prior to the settlement of New England, was included in Nipnet—"the fresh water country,"—the inland region between the Atlantic coast and the Connecticut River. Its inhabitants were known collectively as Nipmucks or Nipnets—"pond or fresh-water Indians,"—in distinction from river and shore Indians. One of their favorite resorts was the great lake, Chaubunnagungamaug, or Chabanakongkomuch,—the "boundary fishing-place,"—the "bound-mark" between Nipmuck and Narraganset territory. This lake lies a few rods north of the present northern boundary line of Windham County, and the Nipmucks claimed land some eighteen or twenty miles south of it. The tract west of the Quinebaug River, north of a line running northwesterly from the junction of the Quinebaug and Assawaga Rivers, was Wabbaquasset—"the mat-producing country"—so called from some marsh or meadow that furnished reeds for mats and baskets, and its inhabitants were known as Wabbaquassetts. A quarry of rock, valued for its sharpening properties, gave its name to a strip of land east of the Quinebaug. Manhunsqueeg or Mahmunsqueeg, "the spot resorted to for whetstones," was near the mouth of a branch of the Assawaga, still known as Whetstone Brook in central Killingly, and a range of land northward and southward was thence

designated Mahmunsqueeg, the Whetstone Country. The land south of Wabbaquasset and Mahmunsqueeg, now included in the towns of Plainfield and Canterbury, was the Quinebaug Country, inhabited by Quinebaugs. The Narragansets claimed rights east of the Quinebaug, and fiercely contested its jurisdiction with the Nipmucks; the Wabbaquassets were subject to Nipmuck chieftains. Some twenty or thirty years before the settlement of Connecticut by white men, a band of Pequots, "apparently of the same race with the Mohicans, Mohigans or Mobicandas, who lived on the banks of the Hudson River," invaded the territory east of the Connecticut, established their head-quarters at the mouth of "the Great River," now known as Thames, drove away the Narragansets, conquered the Quinebaugs and Wabbaquassets, and assumed jurisdiction over all the land now pertaining to Windham County.

These few facts comprise all that can be gathered of the condition of this region previous to the settlement of Connecticut. Of its Indian inhabitants, whether few or numerous, only one has escaped oblivion. A Boston News-Letter chronicles the name and services of Acquittimaug, of Wabbaquasset, now Woodstock. Soon after the arrival of Winthrop's colony in Massachusetts, in 1630, tidings reached the distant Wabbaquassets that a company of Englishmen had come to the Bay, were in great want of corn and would pay a good price for it. The fertile hills of Wabbaquasset were famous even then for their bountiful yield of corn. Acquittimaug's father filled large sacks with the precious commodity, and with his son and other Indians bore the heavy burdens on their backs through the wilderness to the infant settlement at Boston, "when there was but one cellar in the place, and that near the Common." Acquittimaug lived to see the Englishmen in possession of all Nipnet as well as his native Wabbaquasset, and when, in extreme old age, he visited the thriving town of Boston, was welcomed and entertained by the chief dignitaries of the Massachusetts Colony.

The Windham County territory became known to the English at the first settlement of Connecticut in 1635-6. It lay directly in the route from Massachusetts to the Connecticut River, a part of that "hideous and trackless wilderness" traversed by the first colonists. Tradition reports their encampment on Pine Hill in Ashford. A rude track, called the Connecticut Path, obliquely crossing the Wabbaquasset Country, became the main thoroughfare of travel between the two colonies. Hundreds of families toiled over it to new homes in the wilderness. The fathers of Hartford and New Haven, ministers and governors, captains and commissioners, government officials and land speculators, crossed and recrossed it. Civilization passed over it to



regions beyond, but made no halting place upon the way for more than half a century.

Of the condition of the future Windham during this period we have little definite knowledge. The general features of the country were the same as at present—a broken, rock-strewn surface, with many lakes and rivers. Wild, craggy forests, miry swamps and sandy barrens were relieved by fertile valleys and pleasant openings. Large tracts of the best land were burned over by the Indians, and kept open to furnish pasture for deer. Game and fish abounded in wood, lake and river. The principal rivers, lakes and hills bore the same names that now distinguish them. The Quinebaug, Shetucket, Willimantic, Natchaug, Pachaug, Moosup and Mashamoquet Rivers; Egunk, Wanungatuck, Owbesatuck, Tatnick, Mashentuck and Quinnatisset Hills; Mashapaug and Pawcatuck Lakes—all received their names from their aboriginal proprietors. Our Five-mile River was their Assawaga; Little River, their Appaquake; Blackwell's Brook, the Cowisick. An Indian trail, known as Nipmuck Path, ran south from Wabbaquasset to the sea shore. The Greenwich Path crossed eastward from the Quinebaug to Narraganset.

Of the Indians, we know little more than of their country. They were subject clans of little spirit or distinctive character. Their number was small. A few families occupied the favorable localities, while large sections were left vacant and desolate. Their dwellings were poor, their weapons and utensils rude and scanty. They raised corn and beans, and wove mats and baskets. Their lives were spent chiefly in hunting, fishing, idling and squabbling. A few rude forts were built and maintained in various localities.

After the overthrow of the Pequots their lands, by Indian law, lapsed to their conquerors. Uncas, the restless chief of a small band of Mohegans, who had revolted from the great Pequot chieftain Sassacus, and fought with the English against him, now claimed his land on the ground of relationship, and as his power increased assumed jurisdiction over it. The mild and timid Wabbaquassets readily acknowledged him as their master, "and paid him homage and obligations and yearly tribute of white deer-skins, bear-skins, and black wolf-skins." With the Quinebaugs Uncas was less successful. His right to their allegiance was disputed by the Narragansets. Pessacus (*alias* Moosup), brother and successor to Miantonomo, asserted his claim to the Quinebaug Country, affixing his name to the largest branch of the Quinebaug. Uncas denied his right, and extorted tribute when possible. For many years the land was in contention; the distracted Quinebaugs yielding homage to whichever rival chieftain chanced to be in ascendancy. For a time "they had no resident sachem and went

as they pleased," but consented to receive Allumps (*alias* Hyems), Massashowett and Aguntus, renegade Narragansets who had become obnoxious to their own government, and were allowed by Uncas to dwell in Quinebaug, and exercise authority over its wavering inhabitants. They were wild, lawless savages, ambitious and quarrelsome. They built a fort at Egunk Hill, another near Greenwich Path, and a third at Wanungatuck Hill,\* west of the Quinebaug, where they were compelled to dwell a year for fear of the Narragansets.

The Whetstone Country was also in conflict. Uncas claimed that his northern bound extended to the quarry, and his followers were accustomed to resort thither for whetstones, but its Nipmuck inhabitants "turned off to the Narragansets." Nemo and Azzogut, who built a fort at Acquiunk, a point at the junction of the Quinebaug and Assawago Rivers, now in Danielsonville, "carried presents sometimes to Uncas, sometimes to Pessacus." This fort was eleven rods fifteen inches in circumference, four or five feet in height, and was occupied by four families.

Acquiunk and its vicinity is also memorable as a traditional Indian battle-field, the scene of the only aboriginal *rencontre* reported with any distinctness. An interchange of social festivities led to this bloody outbreak. The Narragansets invited their Nipmuck tributaries to visit them at the shore and partake of a feast of shell-fish; the Nipmucks returned the civility by inviting their guests to a banquet of lamprey eels. The shell-fish were greatly relished by the Nipmucks, but the eels, for lack of dressing, were distasteful to the Narragansets. Glum looks and untasted food roused the ire of the Nipmucks. Taunts and retorts soon led to blows. A free fight followed, disastrous to the unarmed Narragansets, of whom but two escaped to carry home the news of the massacre.

A body of warriors was at once dispatched to avenge their slaughtered clansmen. Reaching Acquiunk, they found the Nipmucks intrenched east of the Quinebaug. Unable to cross, they threw up embankments, and for three days waged war across the stream. Many were slain on both sides, but the Nipmucks were again triumphant and forced their assailants to retire, leaving their dead behind them. The bodies of the slain Nipmucks were interred in deep pits on the battle-field, which was ever after known as the Indian Burying Ground. Numerous bones and trinkets found on that spot give some credibility to this legend, which aged Indians delighted to relate to the first settlers of Killingly.

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\* The name applied to this hill, signifying "bent river," originally designated the great bend in the adjacent Quinebaug.

The first transfer of land in Windham County territory from its Indian proprietors occurred in 1653. The first English purchaser was John Winthrop of New London, (afterwards governor of Connecticut Colony), who received the subjoined deeds from Hyems *alias* James, and his associates :—

“ Know all men by these presents, That I, James, sachem of Quinebaug, in consideration of the great friendship formerly from Mr. Winthrop, sometime governor of Massachusetts, and desirous of continuance of the same with his son, now residing at Pequot. And, considering that he hath erected a saw-mill at Pequot, a work very useful both to the English and Indians; for the supply whereof, I consider, I have swamps of timber very convenient, and for divers other good reasons and considerations, me thereunto moving—I the said James, do of mine own free and voluntary will and motion, give, grant, bargain and sell to Mr. John Winthrop, of Pequot, all my land at Pautuxett,\* upon the river that runneth from Quinebaug and runneth down towards Mohigan and towards the plantation of Pequot unto the sea; the bounds thereof to be from the present plot of the Indians’ planting-ground at Quinebaug, where James, his fort is, on a hill at the said Pautuxett, and so down towards Shantuxkett so farr as the right of the said James doth reach or any of his men; so farr on both sides the river as ye right of ye said James doth [reach] or any of his men, with all the swamps of cedar, pine, spruce or any other timber and wood whatever together with them to the said John Winthrop and his heirs.

Witnesses,

RICHARD SMITH,

SAMUEL SMITH,

Nov. 2, 1653.

T. B., mark of THOMAS BAYLEY.”

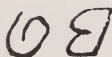
“ Know all men by these presents, That I, Massashowitt, brother of James, doo, upon the consideration mentioned on the other side of this paper by my brother, doo likewise for myself give, grant, bargain and sell and by these presents confirm unto the said John Winthrop of Pequot all that land at Pautuxett, as is on the other side of the paper and in that deed made over by my brother James to the said John Winthrop . . . . And we the said James and Massashowitt do hereby testify that this we do by the full and free consent of Aguntus Punquanon, Massitiarno, brother of Aguntus, also Moas and all the rest of the chief men of these parts about and at Quinebaug, and in their name having all consented thereto. In witness whereof we have hereunto sett—this 25th of November, 1653.

JOHN GALLOP,

JAMES AVERY, Witnesses.



the mark of JAMES.



the mark of MASSASHOWITT.”



Mark of WILLIAM WELOMA,

T. B., Mark of THOMAS BAYLEY.

\* The general name for all Falls, here referring to those at Acquiunk.

The validity of this conveyance is extremely doubtful. The grantors were neither by English or American law vested in the land conveyed. Aguntus himself, at first "blamed Hyems for selling land that was not his," and made him, in the presence of Winthrop, pull off a coat he had received in payment. "A roll of trucking-cloth, two rolls of red cotton wampum, stockings, tobacco pipes and tobacco," secured his consent and confirmation. Robin Cassaminon, a well known Pequot, acted as interpreter in this transaction.

Governor Winthrop took great pains to secure legal confirmation of his Quinebaug purchase. The Narragansets were precluded from prosecuting their ancient claim to this territory by an especial clause in the agreement made by himself and John Clarke, as agents for Connecticut and Rhode Island, concerning the dividing line between their governments, providing, That, "if any part of that purchase at Quinebaug doth lie along upon the east side of that river, that goeth down by New London, within six miles of the said river, then it shall wholly belong to Connecticut Colony, as well as the rest which lieth on the western side of the aforesaid river." The General Court of Connecticut, October, 1671, allowed the Governor his Indian purchase at Quinebaug, and gave him liberty to erect thereon a plantation, but none was attempted. According to Trumbull, "there was a small number of [white] families on the lands at the time of the purchase," but no trace of them has been recovered. An Englishman attempted to settle in Quinebaug about 1650, but was driven off by Hyems' threat "to bury him alive unless he went away."

The Wabbaquassets during these years patiently submitted to the authority of Uncas, and when his eldest son, Owaneco, was grown up, received him as their sachem, "their own chief men ruling in his absence." About 1670, a new light dawned upon them. The influence of the faithful Indian apostle, Eliot, reached this benighted region. Young Indians trained at Natick, as in "a seminary of virtue and piety," went out into the Nipmuck wilderness, and gathered the wild natives into "new praying towns" and churches. Of seven churches thus gathered *three* were within Windham County territory. Joseph and Sampson, only sons of Petavit, sachem of Hamannesset—now Grafton,—“hopeful, pious and active young men,” came as Christian missionaries to Wabbaquasset, and for four years labored and preached faithfully throughout this region. The simple and tractable Wabbaquassets hearkened willingly unto the Gospel thus preached, and many were persuaded to unite in church estate and assume some of the habits of civilization. They observed the Sabbath; they cultivated their land; they gathered into villages. The largest village, comprising some thirty families, was called Wabbaquasset. Its exact locality has



not been identified, but it is known to be included in the present town of Woodstock, either on Woodstock Hill or in its vicinity. The teacher Sampson had his residence here, and under his oversight wigwams were built, the like of which were seen in no other part of the country. Another church and village were gathered some miles northward, at Myanexet, on the Quinebaug—then called the Mohegan River; and a third east of the Quinebaug, among the Nipmucks at Quinnatisset\*—now Thompson Hill. These villages and their inhabitants were under the care and guidance of the faithful Sampson, who held religious services statedly, and endeavored to civilize and elevate them.

The good tidings received from the Nipmuck wilderness greatly cheered the heart of the excellent Mr. Eliot, and in September, 1674, he sat out on a tour to the new Praying Towns, to confirm the churches, settle the teachers over them and establish civil government. He was accompanied by Major Daniel Gookin, who had been appointed by the General Court of Massachusetts, magistrate over the Praying Indians, with power to hold courts and “constitute and appoint Indian commissioners in their several plantations, to hear and determine such matters as do arise among themselves, with officers to execute commands and warrants.” This visit of Eliot is the most striking and noteworthy event in Windham’s aboriginal history, and is detailed with great clearness and vividness by Major Gookin. Five or six godly persons went with them on their journey. After visiting Hamannesset and Machauge, they came, September 14, to a village near Lake Chaubongagum—afterward included in Dudley—where nine families were collected. The chief man and sachem in this vicinity was Black James, “a person that had approved himself diligent, courageous, faithful and zealous to suppress sin,” and who was now appointed constable of all the praying towns. Joseph, one of the young missionaries, was teacher at Chaubongagum. Here Mr. Eliot preached, prayed, sang psalms and spent part of the night discoursing. Next day, accompanied by Black James and Joseph, he proceeded to Myanexet, “seven miles southwest, a village situated in a very fertile country, west of a fresh river called Mohigan.” Twenty families were gathered here, comprising, by Gookin’s estimate, a hundred souls—men, women and children—all eager to welcome and hear the missionaries. A religious service was held, Mr. Eliot preaching in the Indian tongue, from the words, “Lift up your heads, O ye gates . . . and the King of Glory shall come

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\* It has been stated by several historians, unfamiliar with these localities, that the place called Quinnatisset is now included in *Woodstock*, but the original deeds from the natives to English purchasers, make it absolutely *certain* that this name designated territory now in Thompson.

in." At the close of the sermon, Mr. Eliot led forward John Moqua, a pious and sober person, and presented him to the people to be their minister, whom they thankfully accepted in the Lord. Moqua then read a suitable psalm, which was sung by the Assembly. After prayer, the teacher was exhorted to be diligent and faithful, and to take good care of the flock, and the people charged to yield him obedience and subjection.

Major Gookin reported another village at Quinnatisset, six miles south, "within four miles of the south line of Massachusetts Colony," where there were also twenty families and a hundred souls, but they went not to it, being straightened for time and the way rough and dangerous, "but they saw and spake with some of the principal people, and appointed a sober and pious young man of Natick, called Daniel, to be their minister, whom they accepted in the Lord."

After rest and refreshment, the party proceeded on their way, and late in the evening, after a toilsome journey arrived at Wabbaquasset. According to Major Gookin (whose distances are not always accurate), this town was nine or ten miles from Myanexet, six miles west of Mohigan River and seventy-two miles southwest from Boston; and contained thirty families and a hundred and fifty souls. It was situated in a very rich soil, as was manifested by the goodly crop of Indian corn then nearly ingathered, not less than forty bushels to an acre. A spacious wigwam, about sixty feet long and twenty wide, was the residence of the sachem, who was inclined to religion and had the meetings on Sabbath days at his house. The Sagamore was absent, but his squaw courteously admitted the strangers into his wigwam, and provided liberally in their way for their Indian companions. News of their arrival soon spread through the village. The teacher Sampson hastened to greet and welcome the missionaries, and also divers of the principal people, with whom they spent a good part of the night in prayer, singing psalms and exhortations. One grim Indian alone sat mute and took no part in what was passing. At length, after a great space, he arose and spake, and declaring himself a messenger from Uncas, sachem of the Mohegans, who challenged right to and dominion over this people of Wabbaquasset—"Uncas," said he, "is not well pleased that the English should pass over Mohegan River to call his Indians to pray to God."

The timid Wabbaquassets quailed at this lofty message from their sovereign master, but Mr. Eliot answered calmly, "That it was his work to call upon men everywhere to repent and embrace the Gospel, but he did not meddle with civil right or jurisdiction." Gookin, with the authority befitting his office as magistrate, then declared unto him, and desired him to inform Uncas, "That Wabbaquasset was within



the jurisdiction of Massachusetts, and that the government of that people did belong to them, and they do look upon themselves concerned to promote the good of all people within their limits, especially if they embrace Christianity—yet it was not intended to abridge the Indian sachems of their just and ancient rights over the Indians in respect of paying tribute or any other dues, but the main design of the English was to bring them to the good knowledge of God in Christ and to suppress among them their sins of drunkenness, idolatry, powwowing and witchcraft. As for the English, they had taken no tribute from them, nor taxed them with anything of that kind.” With this declaration, the evening session ended; the Indians dispersed; the messenger of Uncas vanished to appear no more, but his irruption among the little band of Indian disciples gathered at the great Apostle’s feet is the most picturesque incident in Windham’s early history.

The day following, September 16th, 1674, is one of the most memorable in Windham annals. The presence of the distinguished visitors was now widely known and had doubtless drawn together at Wabbaquasset all the Indians from surrounding sections. The Praying Indians from Myanexet and Quinnatisset were there, and many others who had never before attended a religious service nor heard of the Englishman’s God. Public worship was held at an early hour—“Sampson first reading and setting the first part of the 119th Psalm,” which was sung by the assembly. Mr. Eliot next prayed and then preached to them in their own language from Matthew vi: 23—“But if thine eye be evil thy whole body shall be full of darkness,”—concluding the service with prayer.

Major Gookin then held a court, establishing civil governments among the natives. First he approved the teacher Sampson—whom he described as “an active and ingenious person, who spake good English and read well,”—and next the constable, Black James; giving each of them a charge to be diligent and faithful in their places: and also exhorted the people to yield obedience to the Gospel of Christ and to those set in order there. He then published a warrant or order, empowering the constable to suppress drunkenness and Sabbath-breaking, and especially powwowing and idolatry, and after warning given, to apprehend all delinquents and bring them before authority to answer for their misdoings. For smaller faults to bring them before Wattasa Companum of Hassanamesset—“a grave and pious man of the chief sachem’s blood;” for idolatry and powwowing, to bring them before himself.

Having thus settled religious ordinances and civil authority, Mr. Eliot and his friends took leave of this people of Wabbaquasset, and

returned the same day through Myanexet to Chaubongagum, greatly pleased with the progress of Christianity and civilization among these tractable and friendly Indians. Seventy families had been reclaimed from heathenism and barbarism and were gathered in churches with ministers set over them, and from this fair beginning they could not but hope that light would shine into all the dark region around them.

These hopeful prospects were soon blighted. The Narraganset war broke out in the following summer and swept away at once the result of years of missionary labor. The villages were deserted; the churches fell to pieces; the Praying Indians relapsed into savages. The Nipmucks east of the Quinebaug joined the Narragansets; the fearful Wabbaquassets left their pleasant villages and planting fields, and threw themselves under the protection of Uncas at Mohegan. Early in August, 1675, a company of Providence men, under Captain Nathaniel Thomas, went out in pursuit of Philip—who had just effected his escape to the Nipmuck Country,—and on the night of August 3d, reached the second fort in that country, “called by the Indians Waposhequash”—(Wabbaquasset). This was on a hill, a mile or two west of what is now Woodstock Hill. Captain Thomas reports “a very good inland country, well watered with rivers and brooks, special good land, great quantities of special good corn and beans and stately wigwams as I never saw the like, but not one Indian to be seen.” The Wabbaquassets were then serving with the Mohegans, and aided in various forays and expeditions, bringing in on one occasion over a hundred of Philip’s men, so that each warrior, at the close of the campaign of 1675, was rewarded for his services by “a payre of breechis” from the Connecticut government.

No battle or skirmish is reported during the war within Windham County territory, but it was repeatedly traversed by scouting parties, and companies of soldiers were sent at different times to “gather all the corne and secure all the swine that could be found therein.” In June, 1676, Major Talcot sat out from Norwich on an expedition through the Nipmuck Country with 240 English soldiers and 200 Indian warriors. They marched first to Egunk, where they hoped to salute the enemy, and thence to Wabbaquasset, scouring the woods through this long tract, but found the country everywhere deserted. At Wabbaquasset, they found a fort and about forty acres of corn growing, but no enemy. The village, with its “stately wigwams” had perhaps been previously destroyed. They demolished fort and corn and then proceeded to Chaubongagum, where they killed and captured fifty-two of the enemy.

The death of Philip the following August closed this bloody and

destructive war. The Nipmucks found themselves almost annihilated. "I went to Connecticut," said Saganore Sam of Nashaway, "about the captives there and found the English had destroyed those Indians, and when I came home we were also destroyed." The grave and pious Wattasa Companum, enticed away by Philip's men, was executed in Boston. Gookin was the only magistrate who opposed the people in their rage against the wretched natives. The few remaining Nipmucks found a refuge with some distant tribes ; the Wabbaquassets remained with Uncas at Mohegan. The aboriginal inhabitants of the future Windham County were destroyed or scattered, and their territory opened to English settlement and occupation.



# BOOK I. 1676-1726.

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## I.

### MASSACHUSETTS BOUNDARY LINE. NIPMUCK AND MOHEGAN LAND TRANSFERS.

**T**HOUGH Windham County is so clearly within the limits of Connecticut, the northern part of this territory was long held by Massachusetts. The boundary between these colonies was many years disputed. The patent of Connecticut allowed her territory to extend northward to the head of Narraganset River, but the previous grant to Massachusetts restricted it to the southern bound of the Bay Colony—"three miles south of every part of Charles River." In 1642, Massachusetts employed Nathaniel Woodward and Solomon Saffery, characterized by her as "skillful and approved artists," to run her southern boundary line. A point on Wrentham Plain was adjudged by them to be three miles south of the most southerly part of Charles River, and there they fixed a station. They then, according to Trumbull, took a sloop and sailed round to Long Island Sound, and thence up Connecticut River to the house of one Bissel in Windsor, where they established another station some ten or twelve miles *south* of that in Wrentham. The line joining these points was the famous "Woodward's and Saffery's Line," accepted by Massachusetts as her southern boundary, and maintained by her seventy years against the reiterated representations and remonstrances of Connecticut. By this deflection, the land now included in the towns of Woodstock and Thompson was appended to Massachusetts, and as a part of the vacant Nipmuck Country awaited her disposal.

That colony was too much impoverished and weakened by the war to be able at once to appropriate her acquisitions, and some years passed ere she attempted even to explore and survey them. The Indians, as they recovered from the shock of defeat, gathered again around their old homes and laid claim to various sections. In May, 1681, the General Court of Massachusetts appointed William Stoughton and Joseph Dudley, two of her most prominent public men, "To take particular care and inspection into the matter of the land in the Nipmuck Country, and what titles were pretended to it by Indians and

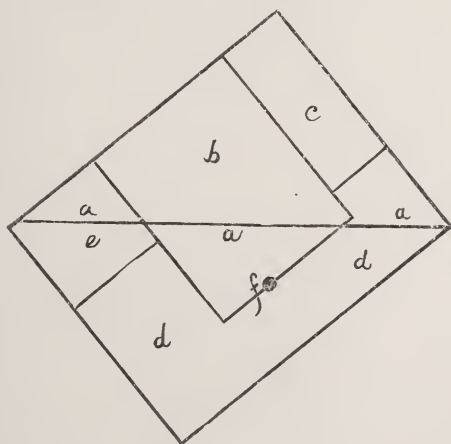


others." A meeting of claimants was accordingly held at Cambridge village, in June, Mr. John Eliot assisting as interpreter. Black James, the former constable at Chabongagum, now appeared as claimant for the south part of the Nipmuck Country. The commissioners found the Indians "willing enough to make claim to the whole country, but litigious and doubtful among themselves," and allowed them till September to arrange some mutual agreement, and then spent a week exploring the country, attended by the principal claimants. They reported Black James' claim as "capable of good settlement, if not too scant of meadow, though uncertain what will fall within our bounds if our line be to be questioned," and advised "that some compensation be made to all the claimers for a full surrender of their lands to the Government and Company of Massachusetts." This advice was accepted, and Stoughton and Dudley further empowered "to treat with the claimers, and agree with them upon the easiest terms that may be obtained." In the following winter the negotiations were completed, and February 10, 1682, the whole Nipmuck Country from the north of Massachusetts to Nash-a-way, at the junction of the Quinebaug and French Rivers, Connecticut—a tract fifty miles long by twenty wide—was made over to the Massachusetts government for the sum of fifty pounds. Black James received for himself and some forty followers, twenty pounds in money and a Reservation of five miles square.

This Indian Reservation was laid out in two sections—one "at a place called Myanexet," east of the Quinebaug, now included in the towns of Dudley, Webster and Thompson,—the other at Quinnatisset, now the south part of Thompson. Five thousand acres at Quinnatisset and a large tract at Myanexet, being a moiety or full half of the whole Reservation, were immediately conveyed, for the sum of ten pounds, to Stoughton and Dudley. A deed, subscribed November 10, 1682, by Black James and other "Indian natives and natural descendants of the ancient proprietors and inhabitants of the Nipmuck Country," released all right to this land and constituted Stoughton and Dudley the first white proprietors of Windham's share of the Nipmuck Country. Dudley long retained his fine farm on the Quinebaug. The Quinnatisset land was soon made over to purchasers. The throwing of so large a tract of country into market incited an immediate rage for land speculation, and capitalists hastened to secure possession of favorable localities. June 18, 1683, Joseph Dudley, for £250, conveyed to Thomas Freak of Hamington, Wells County, England, two thousand acres of forest land in the Nipmuck Country, part of a greater quantity purchased of Black James, "as the same shall be set out by a surveyor." Two thousand acres in upland and meadow, "at

a certain place called and known by the natives Quinnatisset," were also made over by Stoughton, in consideration of £200 current money, to Robert Thompson of North Newington, Middlesex, England—a very noted personage, president of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, and a firm and devoted friend of the colonies. The land thus purchased was laid out in June, 1684, by John Gore, of Roxbury, under the supervision of Colonel William Dudley. Freak's farm included the site of the present Thompson village. The line dividing it from Thompson's ran through an old Indian fort on a hill a mile eastward. Five hundred acres south of Freak's were laid out to Gore; five hundred on the north to Benjamin Gambling of Roxbury, assistant surveyor. These Quinnatisset farms are memorable, not only as the first laid out in the northern part of Windham County, but from their connection with the disputed southern boundary of Massachusetts. Woodward's and Saffery's line crossed the Quinebaug, at its junction with the French River, and thence ran on northeasterly to Rhode Island and Wrentham. It was intended to make this line the south bound of the Quinnatisset farms, but, by an unfortunate blunder, the greater part of Thompson's land and an angle of Gore's fell south of it, intruding upon what even Massachusetts acknowledged as Connecticut territory—an intrusion which occasioned much confusion and controversy. No attempt was made to occupy and cultivate these farms by their owners. Thompson's land remained in his family for upwards of an hundred years, and the town that subsequently included it was named in his honor.

CHART OF QUINNATISSET.



- a.* Woodward's and Saffery's Line. *b.* Freak's Farm. *c.* Gardner's and Gambling's land. *d.* Thompson's land. *e.* Gore's land. *f.* Old Indian fort.

Twelve hundred acres of land between the Quinebaug and French Rivers were sold by Nanasogegog of Nipmuck, with the consent of Black James, to Jonathan Curtis, Thomas Dudley, Samuel Rice and others, in 1634, but other claimants apparently secured it. Five hundred acres, each, allowed by the Massachusetts government to John Collins and John Cotton, were laid out east of the Quinebaug in Quinnatisset. A thousand-acre tract, "granted to the children of Mr. William Whiting, sometime of Hartford," was laid out south of Lake Chaubongagum.

The whole Wabbaquasset Country was yielded by Massachusetts to the claim of Uncas, who, favored by the government and encouraged by interested advisers, assumed to himself a large share of eastern Connecticut. The tract confirmed to him as the hereditary territory of the Mohegans was bounded on the north by a line running from Mahmunsook on Whetstone Brook to the junction of the Quinebaug and Assawaga at Acquinnuk, thence westward to the Willimantic and far beyond it. The Wabbaquasset Country was held by him as a Pequot conquest. It extended from the Mohegan north bound far into Massachusetts, and westward from the Quinebaug to a line running through the "great pond Snipsic," now in Tolland. This large tract was given by Uncas to his second son, Owaneco, while the land between the Appaquage and Willimantic Rivers was assigned by him to his third son, Atanawahood or Joshua, sachem of the Western Niantics. Joshua died in May, 1676, from injuries received during the Narraganset war, and left a will, bequeathing the land between the Willimantic and Appaquage to Captain John Mason and fifteen other gentlemen, "in trust for a plantation." His estate was settled according to the terms of the will, the General Assembly of Connecticut allowing the Norwich legatees the lands bequeathed to them at Appaquage, which, as soon as practicable, was incorporated as the township of Windham.

The first transfer of land in Windham County territory to an English proprietor was that of the Quinebaug Country to Governor Winthrop, in 1653; the *second*, more than a quarter of a century later, conveyed a part of the same land to gentlemen in Norwich. The Court of New London County, September, 1679, adjudged that Uncas and Owaneco should "pass over their Indian right of six hundred acres of land for satisfaction for their men's burning the county prison," in a drunken outbreak. The General Court in October confirmed this verdict, and ordered James Fitch, Jun., treasurer of the county, to sell and dispose of the land. Six hundred acres of land, lying on both sides the Quinebaug, extending from Wanungatuck on the north to a brook now known as Rowland's on the south, previously included in



Winthrop's purchase, were selected by Fitch and sold for forty pounds to John, Solomon and Daniel Tracy and Richard Bushnell, and laid out in June, 1680, by himself and Lieutenant Leffingwell. A farm south of John Tracy's division, adjoining the river island, Peagscomsuek, which gave its name to this section of the Quinebaug valley, was given to James Fitch by Owaneco, and laid out during this summer. Although the General Court had allowed the Governor his purchase at Quinebaug, it had ordered, May, 1680, that "if Uncas hath right to any land about Quinebaug he may make it out and dispose of it to his son Owaneco, and such gentlemen as he shall see cause." Under this sanction, Owaneco assumed the right to the whole Quinebaug Country as well as Wabbaquasset. Swarms of greedy land hunters now assailed the Mohegan chieftain, eager to obtain possession of these lands upon any pretext. Their chief friends and patrons were the sons of Major John Mason, the renowned conqueror of the Pequots; Mr. Fitch, the excellent minister of Norwich; and his eldest son, James. Uncas was sinking into dotage; Owaneco was drunken and worthless. Conscious of his own inability to retain or dispose of this land, the latter personage yielded to the influence and ascendancy of the younger James Fitch, consented to receive him as his guardian, and thus formally acknowledged him:—

"Whereas, at a General Court in Hartford, May 13, 1680, my father, Uncas, had liberty to dispose unto me his land upon Quinebaug River, and the Court at the same time granting me liberty to dispose of it unto gentlemen among them, as I should see cause to do, and a good part thereof I have disposed of already; but finding that some, through their great importunity, and others taking advantage of me when I am in drink, by causing me to sign deeds, not only wronging myself but may spoil it ever being a plantation—for these and other reasons, I make over all my right and title of any and of all my lands and meadows unto my loving friend James Fitch, Jun., for him to dispose of as he shall see cause."

Dec. 22, 1680.

The mark



Of OWANECO.

The signature of Owaneco to any deed of sale was thenceforth considered of no value without the countersign of Fitch. A formal deed of conveyance, executed by Owaneco and confirmed by the General Court of Connecticut, made over to Captain James Fitch, in 1684, the whole Wabbaquasset Country. The Mohegan and Wabbaquasset countries were then for the first time surveyed and bounded, and their bounds confirmed by the Assembly. The whole of the territory now embraced in Windham County, save Joshua's tract

between the Willimantic and Appaquage Rivers and a strip east of the Quinebaug, divided between Massachusetts and Connecticut Colonies, was thus placed in the hands of one individual, destined to play a very prominent part in its early history and subsequent development. Captain—afterwards better known as Major—James Fitch, was a man of great energy, shrewdness and business capacity. As soon as he gained possession of this land he threw it into market. Personal interest, as well as the good of the public, led him to seek to dispose of these vast tracts to good and substantial settlers; to colonies and towns rather than to individuals and speculators. The northern part of Wabbaquasset was under the jurisdiction of Massachusetts, and to a Massachusetts company Fitch sold his first township.

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## II.

### ROXBURY'S COLONY.

THE town of Roxbury was one of the most ancient and influential in Massachusetts Colony. "The Roxbury people were the best that came from England," and filled many of the highest offices in the colonial government. Nothing was lacking for their growth and prosperity but a larger area of territory, their "limits being so scanty and not capable of enlargement" that several persons—"not having received the same benefit of issuing forth as other towns have done, when it has pleased God to increase the inhabitants thereof in their posterity"—were compelled to remove out of the town and colony.

The inconvenience and difficulty accruing from these straitened limits induced its selectmen, William Park, John Bolles, Joseph Griggs, John Ruggles and Edward Morris, to petition the General Court, in October, 1683, for a tract of land seven miles square in the Nipmuck Country, "for the enlargement of the town and the encouragement of its inhabitants"—the land to be laid out "at Quinnotisset or thereabouts, if a convenient way may be found there." This request was granted on condition that an eight-mile tract previously bestowed on Robert Thompson, Stoughton, Dudley and other prominent gentlemen "have the first choice," and "that thirty families be settled on said plantation within three years and maintain among them an able and orthodox godly minister." Roxbury, in town meeting, January 21, 1684, accepted the honored Court's grant, and "did leave it to the selectmen

to consider of sending men to take a view of the place that may be most convenient." To facilitate communication with this new and barbarous region—"the way to Connecticut being very hazardous to travelers by reason of one deep river passing four or five times over"—Major Pyncheon was ordered by the General Court to mark and lay out a better and nearer one, and two Indians appointed to guide him on the way.

Messrs. Thompson and Dudley having selected for their grant the tract soon afterward incorporated as the township of Oxford, Lieutenant Samuel Ruggles, John Ruggles, John Curtis and Edward Morris were sent by Roxbury, in October, 1684, "to view the premises and find a convenient place to take up her grant." With Indian guides, these gentlemen proceeded to the Nipmuck wilderness, and spent due time in searching it. Quinnatisset, for which they had asked, was in part appropriated, but west of the Quinebaug, at Senexet\* and Wabbaquasset, they found land which afforded encouragement for the settlement of a township. The town voted, on their return, to accept of their information, yet gave liberty to any persons to go upon their own charge and take a view of said land, the town for once going being at charge of a pilot. At the same meeting, October 27, 1684, Master Dudley, Master Cowles, Deacon Parks, Lieutenant Ruggles and Edward Morris were appointed "to draw up, upon consideration, propositions that may be most equable and prudent for the settlement of the place, and present them to the town at the next town meeting after lecture." Inhabitants wishing to withdraw from any interest in the tract had liberty so to do without offence and be free from further charges. All others were held responsible for colony settlement and expenses.

Farther "views," confirming Roxbury in her choice of land at Wabbaquasset, negotiations were opened with Captain James Fitch for its purchase and a deed secured through the agency of Dudley and Stoughton.

The planting of her colony was viewed by Roxbury as a grave and momentous affair, requiring much care and deliberation. A general town meeting was called July 13, 1685, for the disposal and settlement of their new grant in the Nipmuck country, when it was agreed and ordered:—

"That if there shall appear to the selectmen thirty persons or upwards who shall give in their names to plant and settle on the said lands, so as to fulfill the grant and conditions of the General Court referring to the same, they shall have to themselves and their heirs the full half of the whole tract of land, in one square, at their own choice, to be proportionally divided among them; and further, the town does engage to assist the said goers and planters with one hundred pounds money, to be paid in equal portions in five

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\* Valley and meadow land adjoining Muddy Brook in the east of Woodstock.

years, to be laid out in public buildings and charges as the old town of Roxbury shall annually determine. The rest of the inhabitants of the town shall have the remaining half, to be equally and proportionably divided to them, to be to them and their heirs forever."

The town adjourned to consider these propositions "until the morrow eight weeks"—when "this agreement and every article or particle thereof was read, voted and unanimously consented thereto, the contrary being put to vote not one appears therein." As an additional encouragement to settlers the town voted:—

"That the estates left behind by goers should be free from rates for raising the hundred pounds allowed them, and that the amount should be entirely expended upon the settlers' half of the grant, and should annually be delivered by £20 a year into the hands of such men as the goers-out of Roxbury should depute, and by them be expended on public works, viz: meeting-house, minister's house, mill, bridges, &c., and that subsequent settlers on Roxbury's half should be liable to bear all public charges with them that go first."

To these liberal offers there was no lack of "subscribers." The hazards indeed were great, but the inducements surpassed them, and the requisite quota of men was soon made up. This emigration project excited great interest and enthusiasm in Roxbury and its vicinity. Town meetings were chiefly occupied with arranging the approaching exodus, plans and propositions were discussed in public and private, and people were only recognized in the capacity of go-ers and stay-ers. A number of pioneers volunteered to go out early in the spring, in advance of the others, break up land, plant it, and make some preparation for the main body of colonists. Their offer was accepted, and for their encouragement it was voted, at a town meeting, March 4, 1686, "That such should have liberty to break up land, and plant anywhere they please for the present year, without being bound to accept it as their share of the grant." The colonists were allowed till September 29th to make and declare their choice of land, and "it was further yielded that they should have a surveyor with them, to be assistant in finding the colony line and promotion of their present design, upon the charge of the whole town."

The thirteen pioneers—Benjamin Sabin, Jonathan Smithers, Henry Bowen, John Frizzel, Matthew Davis, Nath. Garey, Thomas Bacon, John Marcy, Peter Aspinwall, Benjamin and George Griggs, Joseph Lord and Ebenezer Morris, recorded on its first book of records as "the men who went to spy out Woodstock"—left Roxbury about the first of April, 1686. Special religious services were probably held the Sunday preceding their departure. The venerable Mr. Eliot, pastor of the Church in Roxbury, could not but feel a deep interest in this attempt to colonize the scene of his former missionary labors. Infants were recorded by him as "baptized in the same week that we sent out our youth to make the new plantation," and doubtless many fervent



prayers followed them on their perilous journey. By the fifth of April, these perils had been surmounted, and, according to the old record, "several persons came as planters and settlers, and took actual possession (by breaking up land and planting corn) of the land granted to Roxbury—(called by the planters New Roxbury); by the Antient natives, Wapaquasset."

They found a desolate, deserted wilderness. No Indian inhabitants were visible; their forts and villages had been levelled; their corn-fields had "run to waste." The tract was as yet unsurveyed and unbounded; the Massachusetts boundary line was unrecognizable. Following the course of the principal stream, past a picturesque lake, they came to a rich, open valley. A noble hill, bare also, lay to the westward—the Woodstock Hill of the present generation. On this "Plaine Hill" the pioneers established their head-quarters, put up shelters, selected land and planted it, and made what preparation was possible for the coming colony. A sawmill was built and set in operation, on a small brook running into the lake. This stream was called Sawmill Brook; the larger stream was probably named from Muddy Brook, of Roxbury.

In May, they were visited by Samuel Williams, Sen., Lieutenant Timothy Stevens and John Curtis, who, with John Gore as surveyor, came as committee from Roxbury, "to view the land, in order to the laying out of the same; settle the southern bounds (upon or near the colony line), and also to determine the length and breadth of the General Court's grant as they judged most convenient for the town in general, that so the first Goers may make choice of their half thereof." Eleven days were spent by Mr. Gore in making the needful surveys and measurements—Massachusetts' south boundary line evaded their search, so they made a station about one and a half miles south of Plaine Hill, and thence marked trees east and west for the south line of their grant, nearly two miles *south* of the invisible Woodward's and Saffery's line, thus securing to Massachusetts another strip of Connecticut territory. After careful survey and explorations, the committee decided—"if the first goers chose the south side of the tract, to lay the town eight miles in width, from east to west, and six and a half miles from north to south, or so much as should be needful to make up the complement—but if they desire to divide by a line from north to south, it should be six miles from east to west, and eight from north to south."

The committee returned to Roxbury to report their proceedings by June 12th. The time for the departure of the colonists was now approaching. More than the requisite thirty were already enrolled, but permission was now given to persons of other towns whose estates

or other qualifications might be beneficial, to be admitted with the Goers and share their privileges—"if the selectmen of Roxbury and other Goers do approve them." Lieutenant Samuel Ruggles, Timothy Stevens, and Samuel Williams, Sen., were chosen a committee for the new town till the following year, "to issue any differences that may arise among them." July 21, an especial meeting was held in Roxbury, "of a certain number of inhabitants under the denomination of Go-ers," for the more orderly settling the aforesaid village or grant,—when the following agreement was adopted :

"I. That every man should take up what number of acres he pleaseth in his home-lot, not exceeding thirty—and after-rights and divisions of land shall arise, according to the proportion of his home-lot; and all after-charges to arise proportionably upon the home-lots for the first six years.

II. That whoever shall neglect the payment of his rate two months after a rate, made and demanded, shall forfeit for every five shillings two acres of his home-lot, with all proportionable rights, and so consequently, more or less, according to his failure; always provided that they take not his house nor orchard—this forfeiture shall be to those chosen by the company as selectmen, to be improved by them for the use of the public, which rates shall be paid by the public, the person forfeited excepted, which agreement shall stand the first six years.

III. If any meadows should fall out to be in any one's home-lot, it shall be accounted as so much of his proportion of meadow, and his home-lot made up with upland.

IV. That all persons that have planted in the year 1686 shall have two acres of his home-lot free for the first three years, and shall enjoy the land they planted in 1687 and '88, though it fall out in any other person's home-lot.

V. That within one month they will go personally to their new plantation, and there make further agreements, divisions and settlements."

The subjoined list gives the names of those who fulfilled this agreement and took personal possession of the new plantation :—

Edward Morris.	Peter Aspinwall.	Samuel Scarborough.
Ebenezer Morris.	John Frizzel.	Samuel Craft.
James Corbin.	Joseph Frizzel.	Samuel May.
Benjamin Sabin.	Jonathan Smithers.	Samuel Peacock.
Thomas Bacon.	John Butcher.	Joseph Bugbee.
Joseph Bacon.	Jonathan Davis.	John Bugbee.
Henry Bowen.	Jonathan Peake.	Arthur Humphrey.
John Bowen.	Joseph Peake.	John Ruggles.
William Lyon, Sen.	John Hubbard.	Andrew Watkins.
Thomas Lyon.	George Griggs.	John Marcy.
William Lyon, Jun.	Nathaniel Garey.	John Holmes.
Matthew Davis.	Nathaniel Johnson.	John Chandler, Jun.
Ebenezer Cass.	John Leavens.	
John Chandler, Sen.	Nathaniel Sanger.	

These Colonists were all men of good position and character, connected with the best families of Roxbury. Edward Morris, Samuel Scarborough, Samuel Craft, John Chandler and William Lyon, Seniors, Jonathan Peake and Henry Bowen were men advanced in years, going out with grown up sons to the new settlement, leaving estates behind them. A larger number were young men with growing families. A few were still unmarried. None were admitted as proprietors under

nineteen years of age. All were inhabitants of Roxbury but Peter Aspinwall of Dorchester, and John Butcher, James Corbin and John Holmes, from neighboring towns, admitted into the company by consent of the selectmen of Roxbury. Benjamin Sabin had removed recently from Rehoboth, driven thence it is said in the Narraganset War.

### III.

#### NEW ROXBURY.

THE fifth article of the agreement was punctually fulfilled. Before a month had passed the colony had reached the new plantation. Of the intervening period, the last Sabbath service with the church at Roxbury, the departure, the journey, we have no record nor tradition. We can fancy the long emigrant train, with its thirty families, heavily laden carts, sheep and cattle, creeping slowly over the rough highways from settlement to settlement, bivouacking by stream and grove, passing at Medway the last outpost of civilization, and thence toiling onward over the "Old Connecticut Path," through thirty miles of savage wilderness, to their destined home at Wabaquasset. Of the time spent in this journey we can form no accurate estimate—the distance traversed was about eighty miles. They found friends eager to welcome them and some provision for their reception. The young pioneers had not been idle. They had "set up a house" on "Plaine Hill," a rude, barrack-like structure, that also served for a public hall, and here the colonists encamped while making further arrangements. The first public meeting was held August 25, 1686, when, "being met at New Roxbury *alias* Wapaquasset,"—at the Wapaquasset Hall, the planters agreed to take the south half of the tract for their portion, and "that the place where the home-lots shall begin shall be upon the Plaine Hill." On the following day, "finding some difficulty in their proposals of settlement, the planters did mutually agree and choose seven men—" Joseph Griggs, Edward Morris, Henry Bowen, Sen., John Chandler, Sen., Samuel Craft, Samuel Scarborough and Jonathan Smithers—to stake highways needful for the present settlement, and a lot for the minister, and consider of land convenient for the planters to settle on, and for a convenient place for a meeting house to stand on." Each planter also declared at this meeting what number of acres he desired

in his home-lot,\* according as he was willing and thought himself able to carry on public charges, and liberty was given to any one to designate the particular piece of land he might desire for the same, "otherwise, for the whole to settle as the lots shall fall by a lot."

These instructions were immediately carried out. There was great need of promptness. Thirty families were to be provided with homes before winter, and land made ready for cultivation the ensuing summer. The seven wise men, "chosen for the laying out and pitching the town," hastened to view the land, and "judged it convenient for the inhabitants to settle on these places following, viz.: the Plaine Hill, the eastward vale and the westward hill." This "eastward vale" is now known as South Woodstock; the "westward hill" as Marcy's. A highway, eight rods wide, was marked out over Plaine Hill, extending to a brook at the north end of the east vale, and thence south along the vale, six rods wide, to Sawmill Brook, "with a cross highway, four rods wide, about the middle," where it might be most convenient after the lots were examined. An eight-rod highway was also designated from the north end of Plaine Hill to the east side of the westward hill, and another, four rods wide, to encircle that hill, which were accounted sufficient for the present. It was agreed that the meeting-house should stand on the middle of Plaine Hill, to accommodate the three settlements, and that the home-lots should begin at the north end of this hill. A lot of twenty acres, with rights, was reserved for the future minister. A quarry of flat stones was sequestered for hearthstones and flagging, and a deposit of clay to furnish bricks for chimneys. After making these arrangements, it was found that the pieces of land selected for home-lots would be too small for the number of acres designated, and considering that great lots would scatter the inhabitants, it was agreed that they would settle but one-third of the number specified—that is, a thirty-acre lot to be reduced to a twenty, and all the rest in the same proportion.

So efficient was the committee, that in two days these arrangements were perfected, and the land made ready for distribution. The Go-ers or Planters met on Plaine Hill, Saturday, August 28, 1686 [O. S.], "in order to draw lots where their home-lots should be." This important affair was conducted with much ceremony and solemnity. The seven oldest men of the company, who had served as committee, now had charge of the distribution. The main body of the settlers had arranged themselves in three companies, as claimants for the three specified localities. Liberty was then given "to those that desired to sit down on the Plaine Hill to draw by themselves." Others desiring to sit down on the east vale had liberty to draw for that by themselves, and those wishing to settle on the west hill, also. Those who had preferred to



designate their particular lot now manifested their choice. John Chandler, Sen., took his home-lot "on the brook, both sides the highway, at the north end of the east vale." In respect of accommodation of water, the land not being so good, an addition was allowed him. Samuel Scarborough and Samuel Craft took home-lots for their sons, east of land adjoining Plaine Hill, north of the highway leading to east vale. William Lyons, Sen., desired to have the last, or ninth, on the west side the Plaine Hill, which was also allowed. "Then, after solemn prayer to God, who is the Disposer of all things, they drew lots, according to the agreement, every man being satisfied and contented with God's disposing; and were settled as follows:—"

1. Thomas and Joseph Bacon, thirty acres, at the north end, west side the Plaine Hill, abutting east and north on highways.
2. James Corbin, twenty acres, west side Plaine Hill; bounded east on highway, north with first lot.
3. Minister's lot, twenty acres; bounded north by second.
4. Benjamin Sabin, twenty acres; bounded east on highway, north on third lot.
5. Henry Bowen, fifteen acres; bounded north on fourth and south on sixth lot.
6. Thomas Lyon, sixteen acres; between fifth and seventh.
7. Ebenezer Morris, eighteen acres; south of sixth.
8. Matthew Davis, sixteen acres; south of seventh.
9. William Lyon, Sen., and Ebenezer Cass, south end of Plaine Hill; bounded east by common land.

The seventeen home-lots laid out in the east vale were thus distributed:—

10. John Chandler, Sen., thirty acres; north end, eastward vale, just north of Sawmill Brook.
11. Peter Aspinwall, twenty acres; west side of vale, abutting east 'on highway.
12. John Frizzel, twenty acres; bounded north on eleventh.
13. Joseph Frizzel, twenty acres; south of twelfth lot.
14. Jonathan Smithers, thirty acres; bounded north and east by highway, west by common.
15. John Butcher, sixteen acres; south of fourteenth lot.
16. Jonathan Davis, eighteen acres; south of fifteenth.
17. Jonathan Peake, twenty acres; south end of east vale.
18. Nathaniel Garey, fifteen acres; bounded south on seventeenth.
19. John Bowen, fifteen acres.
20. Nathaniel Johnson, sixteen acres; east side of the vale, bounded west by highway.
21. John Hubbard, ten acres.
22. George Griggs, fifteen acres; east side eastward vale, bounded west and north on highways.
23. Benjamin Griggs, fifteen acres; west and south on highways.
24. William Lyon, Jun., fifteen acres; bounded south by twenty-third lot.
25. John Leavens, north of twenty-fourth.
26. Nathaniel Sanger, twenty acres; north of Leavens.

The 27th and 28th lots, assigned to Samuel Scarborough and Samuel Craft, were laid out east of Plaine Hill, bounding south on the highway. The home-lots on the westward hill were next distributed:—

29. Samuel May, fifteen acres; north part of west hill; bounded at east and west end on highways.
30. Joseph Bugbee, fifteen acres; south of May's.

31. Samuel Peacock, ten acres; bounded north by thirtieth lot, east by highway.

22. Arthur Humphrey, twelve acres; west of Peacock's, and bounded west by highway.

33. John Bugbee, south of Humphrey's; fifteen acres.

34. John Ruggles, twenty acres.

35. Andrew Watkins, twenty acres; south of Ruggles'.

36. John Marcy, fifteen acres; south part of west hill.

37. Edward Morris, east side of Plaine Hill, "bounded west by the great highway; south, partly by land reserved for public use and partly by land of Samuels Craft and Scarborough; east by common land; north upon the highway that goeth from the street to the Great Pond."

Thirty eight persons had thus been constituted proprietors of the south half of New Roxbury. All subsequent divisions of woodland, upland and meadow were to be based upon the number of acres comprised in each man's home-lot, and all public charges levied in the same proportion. It was agreed by the proprietors, "That if any man should neglect to take actual possession of his lot, by not breaking up ground, nor fencing nor improving by the middle of May, 1687, he should forfeit twenty shillings." At a proprietors' meeting, held November 3, at the house of Thomas Lyon, three additional home-lots were distributed—No. 38 to Joseph Peake, north of Sawmill Brook; No. 39 to John Holmes, north part of east vale, south of Sawmill Brook; No. 40 to John Chandler, Jun., west side the highway, adjoining that laid out to his father.

A report of their choice of the south half of the tract and further proceedings was at once forwarded to Roxbury—who immediately took measures for the payment of the first installment of the promised hundred pounds, by ordering a perfect "noate" of each person's estate from which each Stayer's share of charge could be computed.

At New Roxbury, all was life and animation. Measurements were to be completed, bounds settled, roads made passable, land broken up and shelters erected. For a few weeks the settlers remained at the first encampment, a happy company of relatives and neighbors, with women to manage domestic affairs and children's voices ringing over the hill-slopes. But though hopeful and resolute they were not without anxieties. Vast forest tracts surrounded the little settlement, traversed by wild beasts and, perhaps, more, savage Indians. Deer and game were abundant, wolves and bears not uncommon. A watch was set every night to patrol the encampment and scouts sent out to range the adjacent woodland. Religious services on the Sabbath were held for a time in the open air—a large, flat rock near Plaine Hill serving for a pulpit. At the first business meeting after the division of land, Edward Morris, John Chandler and William Lyon were chosen "to treat with young Mr. John Wilson, of Medfield, to come and preach to the planters in order to settlement," but the negotiation was probably unsuccessful, as no preacher was procured for some time afterward.

As the winter came on, the families withdrew to such separate abodes as were provided. Thomas Lyon's house was occupied by the first of November, and doubtless others were equally forward. Of this first long, lonely winter we know nothing. No serious trouble or difficulty occurred, but the settlers must have suffered from loneliness and isolation. Oxford and Mendon were the nearest Massachusetts settlements, and many miles of savage wilderness separated them from Providence, Hartford and Norwich. Few travelers passed in winter over the old Connecticut Path, and communication with the outer world was difficult and infrequent. One item of news received during this interval gave them great anxiety—the arrival of Sir Edmond Andross in Boston, as governor of the United Colonies. The charters and privileges of the Colonists were taken from them, and even the infant settlement at Wabbaquasset was not secure from his oppressions and extortions.

Early in the spring of 1687, the New Roxbury planters began planting and sowing and in anticipation of the goodly harvest expected, on April 29, appointed Edward Morris, Nath. Johnson and Joseph White "to treat and agree for the building of a corn mill on as reasonable terms as they could, which terms the public was to stand to and each man to bear his equal proportion." William Bartholomew, of Branford, a former resident of Roxbury, was the person selected and secured as miller, who—"for building a corne mill on the falls below Muddy Brook pond"—now Harrisville—"and finding the town with grinding good meal, clear of grit, as other towns have generally found," received, "(1.) a place at the falls to set a mill which shall have the benefit of the streams; (2.) a fifteen-acre home-lot, with rights, fifteen acres of upland and thirty acres of meadow; (3.) a hundred acres of upland." A ten-acre home-lot was also granted to his son, Isaac, and in September—"twenty acres more were granted to William Bartholomew, provided he bring his wife and settle upon it by next June." As no town organization was yet practicable, at a general meeting of the inhabitants of New Roxbury, July 2d, 1687, "John Chandler, Sen., Nath. Johnson, Jos. Bugbee, Jas. White and James Peake were chosen to order the prudential affairs of the place, as selectmen, for the year ensuing."

The condition of public affairs continued to give the Colonists great anxiety. Under the administration of Andross all previous land titles were vacated, and the first settlers of Massachusetts, after fifty or sixty years' possession, were obliged to pay heavily for new deeds of their lands and homesteads. The New Roxbury settlers had received no governmental confirmation of their grant since taking possession, and their homes and property were wholly at the mercy of the arbitrary

and unscrupulous Governor. The mother town was almost equally interested in securing her grant, and joined with the colonists in earnest efforts to procure a confirmation from Government. Petitions were presented to the Governor in July and October, without effect. In November, 1687, John Chandler, Sen., Joseph Peake and Nathaniel Johnson were chosen by the planters, "to join the committee sent by Roxbury to get a patent of confirmation of this half the grant in the name and behalf of the whole number of inhabitants," but this united effort was equally fruitless. "A humble petition" was presented to Sir Edmond Andross in April, 1688, by John Chandler, Samuel Scarborough, and Nathaniel Johnson, representing themselves as "dwellers in a place called New Roxbury, where a tract of land, seven miles square, was granted by General Assembly to Roxbury, and one half, sixteen thousand acres, given to us that should plant the same, which we have done, to our very great charge, and now pray your Honor to confirm the same to us on the terms already given, or on such moderate quit-rent as may be agreeable to your Excellency's wisdom and the great distance and poverty of place and inhabitants will allow."

Thirty settlers had previously expressed their satisfaction with this petition, and obliged themselves to pay such charges as might arise according to their proportion of land, but this provision was needless. No notice was taken of their request, and neither confirmation given nor quit-rent demanded. Governor Andross and his officials were too much absorbed in enforcing authority over refractory governments and extorting levies from wealthy towns and corporations to heed the cry of a remote and straitened settlement. Their poverty and obscurity were their safety. No greedy government officer claimed land or taxes, and the New Roxbury settlers were left to pursue their way unmolested.

In the first four years little was accomplished. Land was broken up and cultivated, fences put up, orchards set out, highways constructed, houses made more comfortable, John Holmes, agreeing to run the sawmill, was allowed the piece of land on which the mill stood—three hundred and four acres, bounded east and north by the brook, laid out for the town's use—"provided he leave convenient way to carry timber to mill." Home lots were laid out from time to time, for the sons of such proprietors as reached the age entitling them to claim them:—

- Lot 41, to William Bartholomew.
- Lot 42, to Isaac Bartholomew.
- Lot 43, to Clement Corbin.
- Lot 44, to Samuel Rice.
- Lot 45, to William Bartholomew, Jun.
- Lot 46, to Joseph Bugbee, Jun.
- Lot 47, to Nathaniel Johnson, Jun.
- Lot 48, to Jabez Corbin.



Jonathan Smithers' lot not being improved was made over to Joseph Deming and Samuel Lyon. That of John Ruggles, on Westwood Hill, "he never coming to possess it—was given to John Bugbee, Sen." The lot assigned to Samuel Rice, a new settler, was laid out "by John Marcy's on West Hill." Jabez Corbin's lot adjoined that of James Corbin, his father. Joseph Peake was settled "north side of Sawmill Brook, southwest from the Great Pond." The first death occurring in the settlement was that of Joseph Peake, Sen., whose place on a committee was filled by Samuel Scarborough, March 1, 1688.

March 12, 1688, Edward Morris, John Chandler, Sen., Benjamin Sabin, Joseph Bugbee, William Bartholomew, Samuel Rice and John Butcher were chosen and inpowered by the inhabitants to state and lay out highways which were thought necessary for the present and future good of the whole town. This committee attended to the matter with all expedition, and made report as follows:—

1. A highway running through Joseph Peake's lot, two rods wide, into the common towards the mill.
2. One out of the first, by Jonathan Davis's, and so on to the west side Planting Hill; thence running north under east side of hill into Jos. Peake's; six rods wide.
3. One between thirteenth and fourteenth lots, extending west to common.
4. One between twenty-second and twenty-third, extending to mill, four rods wide.
5. One between tenth and eleventh, two rods wide.
6. One from the brook, at the north end Eastward Vale, to go and be by the Pond, through the plaine to Muddy Brook, from thence to Plaine Hill, eight rods.
7. One between part of tenth lot and land granted to John Holmes, three rods, till it comes to Sawmill Brook, thence four rods, till it comes between the Ponds, and so over the brook into the woods, with another turning to the mill through the Common.
8. One between forty and forty-second, to a rocky hill.
9. One east side of twenty-seventh lot, extending north into the highway from Muddy Brook to Plaine Hill.
10. A narrow way from Plaine Hill by thirty-seventh lot.
11. One between eighth and ninth, thence to the clay pits.
12. One from the south part of Wabbaquasset Hill to Long Hill.
13. One leading over a brook south end of west meadows, and so into woods.
14. One going out of the highway, north part, east side of West Hill.
15. One between thirty-fourth and thirty-fifth lots.
16. One going out from one over Plaine Hill.
17. A highway going out of the way leading to Muddy Brook, to lead to the road called Connecticut Road, extending through the interval west side of Muddy Brook.

This report was accepted, and the several highways were constructed. A bridge was also built over Sawmill Brook, near John Chandler's. Other improvements waited a more formal town organization and funds from Roxbury. No further attempt was made to secure a patent from Andross. The settlers chose to bide their time in patience. During these anxious years, one of their oldest and most useful citizens was removed from them—the senior Edward Morris. A rude gravestone

on Woodstock Hill—the oldest in Windham County—bears this inscription—

“Here Lies Buried Y<sup>e</sup>  
Body of Edward Morris.  
Deceased, Sept. y<sup>e</sup> —  
1689.”

His son Edward succeeded to the home-lot, “east side of Plaine Hill.”

The Revolution, deposing James II. and establishing William and Mary upon the throne of Great Britain, was warmly welcomed by the New Roxbury Colony, and as soon as practicable after the resumption of colonial government, they renewed their attempts to secure formal confirmation. At a town-meeting in Roxbury, Jan. 13, 1690, it was voted, “To move or request the General Court to grant the settlement in Nipmuck to be a town, confirm the same and give it a name,” and a memorial was shortly prepared, representing:—

“That the conditions of their grant had with great difficulty been performed, although at present, through the great overturns that have been, said village is not in all respects at present in capacity though with much earnestness labored for; and we do pray the Honorable Court to contribute to our encouragement by favorable acceptance of the conditions so fulfilled, whereby they will be animated cheerfully to encounter the difficulties attending such a work, especially in these difficult and dangerous times.”

Roxbury’s significant admission that her colony was not in all respects “in capacity” to claim the confirmation of the grant, referred undoubtedly to its failure to fulfill that important condition—the settlement of an orthodox minister—a failure that in less difficult and dangerous times might have cost them their township. The “great overturns that had been” were probably deemed a sufficient excuse for this omission. This memorial from Roxbury was soon followed by one still more urgent from Edward Morris, William Bartholomew, Nathaniel Johnson and John Butcher, “in behalf of themselves and the rest of the inhabitants of the plantation granted to Roxbury,” praying:—

“That having fulfilled the conditions of the grant, your Honors would please to grant us confirmation according as it is already taken up west of Quinebaug River, and grant us the privilege of a township, and give the town a name, and grant it to be rate-free for five years and appoint us a committee to regulate us in case of any differences that we cannot issue ourselves.”

Upon consideration that this plantation appeared to be within Massachusetts patent lines, and no particular proprieties previously granted, the “petition was granted by the deputies and honorable magistrates consenting.” March 15, 1690, it was further voted by the deputies, “That the name of the plantation granted to Roxbury be Woodstock, and that Captain Thomas Thurston, Lieutenant Samuel

Barber, of Medfield, and Josiah Chapin, of Mendon, be a committee to advise and assist." That the town was indebted for its name to Judge Sewall, appears from an entry made in his diary:—

"March 18, 1690. I gave New Roxbury the name of Woodstock because of its nearness to Oxford, for the sake of Queen Elizabeth and the notable meetings that have been held at the place bearing the name in England."

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#### IV.

#### WOODSTOCK.

**T**HE new Roxbury Colony, thus invested with town privileges, was enabled to institute a more regular government and make arrangements for settling the much-desired minister. No immediate change was made in public officers. At the first town-meeting in Woodstock, March 31, 1690, the selectmen were ordered "to make a rate of expenses, and deliver the same to be collected by John Holmes, constable," and in May, were empowered "to treat with Mr. Josiah Dwight about settling in the work of the ministry; leaving it to their discretion what to give him, so as they exceed not what was formerly proposed to others, specially in the money part." From the terms of this vote, it is probable that Mr. Dwight was then in Woodstock and had preached to the satisfaction of the people. He was son of Timothy Dwight, of Dedham, was graduated from Harvard College in 1687, and though but twenty years old, had already completed his ministerial studies. The terms proposed by the selectmen were, "thirty pounds a year and diet before settlement, ten pounds in money; after settlement, forty pounds the first year; fifty pounds the second year; sixty pounds afterward; ten pounds each year in money, paid quarterly, the remainder in current pay. Also, a twenty-acre home-lot, with town rights and divisions, and to build and finish a house by Jan. 1, 1692—said house and land, if it please God you are taken away by death, after possession, to be yours—or after ten years abiding with us."

Mr. Dwight accepted these terms, October 17, and thenceforth officiated as minister of Woodstock, holding religious services at Wabbaquasset Hall or in private houses. A committee was appointed "to manage the building a minister's house; forty feet long, nineteen feet wide, fourteen feet stud, with a cellar seventeen feet square, a stack of four chimneys, and two gables to be raised and covered; one end to be finished by May, 1692, and the other as soon as they can

conveniently—workmen to bring in their account weekly to John Chandler, Jun.” An orchard had been previously set out for the minister. Ordination and church organization were delayed for some years. Most of the Woodstock settlers were members of the church in Roxbury, and still enjoyed its fellowship and care. Children, as they grew up, united with the church in the mother-town. Mr. Dwight himself joined the Roxbury church in 1692, together with John Lyon, John May, Penuel Bowen, Jonathan Curtis and Edward Morris.

Important town meetings were held on November 27 and 28, 1690, when new town officers were chosen and various public works inaugurated. John Chandler, Jun., was chosen Town-clerk; Jonathan Peake, Matthew Davis and Samuel Rice, surveyors. The selectmen elected were John Chandler, Sen., William Bartholomew, Benjamin Sabin, John Leavens and Joseph Bugbee, in whose hands were placed “the whole power of the town excepting granting lands and admitting inhabitants.” It was voted, “that the town be at the charge of digging clay, tempering of it, making a yard, cutting wood and carting it for bricks for the minister’s chimneys.” As cattle were allowed to roam at large, a capacious pound was ordered, forty feet square, with four lengths of rails each way and seventeen rails in height, to stand in front of Matthew Davis’s lot on Plaine Hill, near the highway. The houses of Benjamin Sabin and Nathaniel Johnson, in the southern and eastern extremities of the settlement, were selected to be the watch-houses of the town, and it was ordered, “That every man get a ladder to his house by the first of February next, on penalty of five shillings.” As no schools were yet practicable, “it was requested and procured that John Chandler teach and instruct children and youth how to write and cypher.” With regard “to several quarrels,” which unfortunately had arisen, the town wisely agreed “to stand to the determination of the General Court’s Committee.”

At a town meeting, February 24, 1691, at the house of Benjamin Sabin, John Chandler, Jun., was chosen “clerk of the writs; Jonathan Davis, constable.” At this meeting, the meadows of the town were distributed among forty five proprietors, each receiving his portion of good and bad meadow. This division was made by John Butcher, surveyor, assisted by William Bartholomew and Benjamin Sabin, in judging of the “quality of the land and making allowance to those that was not so good as their neighbors.” Five shillings a day, in land, were allowed Mr. Butcher for his services. John Holmes, in consideration of his important services in running the sawmill, had been already allowed, as part of his after division, “the corner of land lying at the east end of his lot, south side of the Sawmill Brook, down to Muddy Brook and the highway between the ponds . . . he



paying the town two thousand slit work and two thousand boards, that is to say, y<sup>e</sup> sawing of them." A hundred acres were now granted to William Bartholomew, the manager of the grist mill, "on the Long Hill by the south meadow to Mashamoquet line." Ten acres, for a home-lot, was also granted to John Jones, "provided he settle here and improve and stay seven years or else return the same to the town." Bridges, during this year, received much attention. Two new ones were ordered between Bartholomew's and Sabin's. Peter Aspinwall agreed to repair the bridge by John Chandler's and keep it in repair seven years, to offset his proportion of town charges. The town also agreed "to be at the charge of making a way unto the cedar swamp on the other side of the Quinebaug River, for a road to Providence," and Benjamin Sabin was chosen "to oversee the works and take account of the same, and Peter Aspinwall if he can't do it." The work was done by the latter personage, and proved a very difficult and laborious enterprise, and led to the permanent removal of Peter Aspinwall to "the other side of the Quinebaug."

In October, measures were taken for building a meeting-house. John Leavens, Edward Morris, Jonathan Peake and John Chandler, Sen., were appointed a committee for building, with power to let out the work and improve men to work on the same. A rate of "nine-pence an acre in pay and four-pence in money" was levied to pay Mr. Dwight's salary and town charges. A five-rail fence was ordered about the clay pits, to take in two acres of land. It was also agreed that "men that failed to attend town meetings should pay three shillings" for each omission.

Now that Woodstock had secured minister, mills, pound, ways and bridges, she began to be seriously annoyed by Indians. Many Wabbaquassets had returned to their ancient homes and hunting fields, little improved by their sojourn in Mohegan, or inclined to be friendly with Massachusetts settlers in possession. Their chief, Tokekamowootchaug, and his followers, were idle, drunken and disorderly, "to the great grief of good men and the prejudice of themselves and better disposed Indians, who were oftentimes beaten and bruised and almost brought to death's door" by them. The condition of public affairs at this time greatly increased the alarms and anxiety of the Woodstock settlers. England and France were at war, and all the Indian tribes were disturbed and uneasy. The fierce Mohawks took part with the French, and other tribes were doubtful and uncertain. The Wabbaquassets were ready and willing to aid Connecticut, whose authority they acknowledged, but their dislike of Massachusetts jurisdiction made them very unsafe and unreliable residents, and obliged the settlers to exercise

constant care and vigilance. A petition to the Governor of Massachusetts, February 22, 1692, from the selectmen of Woodstock, reported many outrages and disturbances from drunken Indians, and prayed for authority to punish such offenders, that for the future such disorders and woful practices might be prevented. Among other Wabbaquassetts now residing in Woodstock was found John Acquittamaug, who well remembered his transportation of corn to Boston at its first settlement, and ever maintained friendly relations with the Massachusetts settlers.

The division and distribution of land occasioned some jealousy and dissatisfaction. Parties were not always satisfied with the portions assigned them, and private sales failed to meet the public approval. To remedy these evils, it was voted at a public meeting, January 8, 1692, "That there be a committee of three men, chosen by the town, to give their voice and suffrage upon all lands that shall be brought in under the surveyor's hands to be recorded, and none shall be recorded but such as they shall approve of, and if any person shall be grieved, they shall have their liberty to appeal to the grand committee appointed by the General Court, and they that be called before committee shall bear the cost of this meeting, and that this be done as soon as may be." Nathaniel Johnson, William Bartholomew and Edward Morris were accordingly appointed to this office. In March, it was agreed, "That the meeting-house should be thirty feet long, twenty-six feet wide and fourteen feet stud, with one gable on each side." A committee was appointed to set out the work. Mr. Dwight's house, with its chimneys and gables, was so far completed in 1693 as to be used for public meetings. A code of by-laws was now completed, for the better ordering of the town, and a "clark of the market" added to its officers. John Chandler, Jun., was allowed twelve-pence for writing the notes of every town-meeting, and sixpence for every record of grants, he giving a copy of the same into the bargain." "A very clear vote," also granted him twenty acres of land "for writing in the town-books and recording ear-marks." Though so active and useful in Woodstock, young Chandler was now much occupied in surveying land in Connecticut, laying out for Major Fitch innumerable land sales. November 10, 1692, he married Mary Raymond, of New London, and for some years made his family residence in that town, but still retained his interest and offices in Woodstock.

John Butcher, the first appointed surveyor of Woodstock, was also much occupied with Connecticut land surveys, assisting in running the Colony line and other important boundaries.

In 1693, Woodstock first attained "the conveniency of a shop," twelve rods of land adjoining his father's lot, being allowed to Jabez

Corbin for that purpose. James Corbin and his son Jabez were the first traders or speculators of the Roxbury Colony, and their shop on Plaine Hill soon became a place of much public resort and the centre of an extensive traffic. They dealt largely in furs; they collected turpentine from the adjoining forests; they took in the surplus produce of the planters, exchanging them and any marketable commodities for liquor, ammunition and other necessities in Boston. The Indians, whose drunkenness caused such grief to good men, may have received their liquor from the Corbins in exchange for peltry. "James Corbin's cart" was one of the institutions of Woodstock, its chief avenue of communication with the outer world, and its owner was a person of no small influence and consideration.

Relations with the mother town had now become less amicable. The colony had cost Roxbury much and given her nothing. Her share of the grant was still in its native wildness, used only for pasturing such stock as could be trusted,—“cattle in the woods”—and, “a mare running in Woodstock,” being included in the estates of Roxbury owners. Open and unenclosed, the land had no protection from trespassers, and Woodstock people often found it convenient to get cedar and other timber there. These various causes made Roxbury somewhat remiss in paying her promised bounty, occasioned much delay in furnishing the minister's house and meeting-house, and called out many petitions and remonstrances from the colony.

April, 1693, it was voted, “That if the town of Roxbury will pay the £100 due to us; £10 by May next, and £60 next May, and pay for the surveying of the township, and will, within two months, send up a committee to run a dividing line between us and the remaining half, setting forth to us the same according to agreement, we are willing to accept hereof in full satisfaction of all damages, providing this renouncing of damages may omit for other troubles.” Roxbury not assenting, in September, John Butcher was chosen, “to join with Captain Chapin, of Mendon, to go to Roxbury, and agree and determine all matters supposed to be in difference, particularly the £100 and the remaining part of land.” By this mediation, all differences were arranged and part of the £100 remitted. The town, November 23, “returned thanks to Captain Chapin for his services, and voted to appropriate £8 of Roxbury money towards finishing the minister's house; £10 of the same to buy nails and irons for the meeting-house, and thirty shillings for the town standards.”

During the winter, the meeting-house was completed, and in March, 1694, “the committee were enjoined to deliver the meeting-house and lot, with all appurtenances, to Mr. Dwight, and make return and acceptance.” Of this first house of worship in Windham County

territory, nothing is known but its dimensions. It was doubtless a rude, ungainly structure, with rough board seats and no attempt at finish. All public meetings were thenceforward held in the meeting-house, and the selectmen were ordered to appraise the White House—probably Wabbaquasset Hall—and sell it, if they had opportunity, to defray town charges.

The completion of the meeting-house was now followed by the organization of the church, but, unfortunately, of this event there is no existing record—and just at this period a gap in Roxbury church records makes it impossible to ascertain the date of the dismissal of her Woodstock members. All that is known is, that prior to 1696 a church was regularly organized in the south half of Woodstock, “by a council assembled according to the common usage of the churches in the Province of the Massachusetts Bay,” and that Mr. Josiah Dwight was ordained as its pastor. Cambridge platform was adopted for its rule of discipline. John Chandler, Sen., and Benjamin Sabin were chosen as deacons. The ordination of Mr. Dwight was now followed by his marriage, December 4, 1695, to Mary Partridge, of Hatfield.

The greater part of the territory of Woodstock was as yet uninhabited and even unappropriated, the settlers occupying little more than its southeast corner. April 11, 1694, it was voted, by a very clear vote:—

“That a division of land be laid out, with as much expedition as may be to the proprietors, from the east line, east side of y<sup>e</sup> Pond, to four miles westward, and all swamps already laid out as swamps and all swamps that fall in any division (not less than an acre in a piece) shall be esteemed equal to two acres of land, and accordingly shall be allowed to any person to whom it shall fall. And that the division be double to the home-lot—a twenty-acre home-lot to have forty acres, and so proportionably.”

William Bartholomew, Benjamin Sabin and Benjamin Griggs, with the surveyor (John Butcher), were chosen “to effect the whole work, having respect to highways which they are to lay out when needful and convenient.” If any lot should fall out badly, they were to allow quantity for quality. Such pieces of land as they should judge unfit to lay out they were to pass over and make true report of all their doings. Under these directions, fifty-one lots were laid out and distributed. Samuel Perrin, John Carpenter and John Mowry, all of Roxbury, had now removed to Woodstock, and received each a share of this division. Reservations of land were set aside for public purposes. “A piece of land between Jabez Corbin’s and the highway,” and also “a piece of meadow lot,” were devoted to maintaining a school. A square piece of land in front of James Corbin’s, containing four or five acres, was sequestered for a training-place and burial-ground, and still forms a part of Woodstock’s pleasant common. The house and home-lot occupied by Mr. Dwight were formally made over to him



and his heirs, and the hill reserved for the support of the ministry ordered to be fenced and planted with orchards. Deacon John Chandler was granted the improvement of a piece of ground for five years to try the experiment of growing tobacco, "the same being part of a highway and part of the common the Indians lived on."

Massachusetts' doubtful title to the land included in Woodstock gave its inhabitants some anxiety. The early suspicion that this land would not fall within the Bay Colony were her bounds to be questioned, was now greatly strengthened, and those most familiar with the country were satisfied that Woodstock even extended two miles south of Woodward's and Safferey's line. This fact led some of the Woodstock settlers to apply to the General Assembly of Connecticut for a confirmation of such land as fell within their colony bounds. Connecticut graciously granted their request, together with freedom from country charges for two years. A sharp rebuke from Roxbury of this recognition of the claims of Connecticut, called out the curt reply from Woodstock's selectmen, that it was done "by no town vote or act, nor yet by order of the selectmen, but by some particular person, and we do not know they intended you any harm."

In 1695-96, Roxbury accomplished the division of the south half of her share of Woodstock. "John Butcher was pitched upon for surveyor;" Lieutenant Samuel Ruggles and John Davis, Sen., were chosen committee to superintend the survey and laying out. It was agreed that each individual should receive ten acres of land for every shilling expended by him in colony charges, and pay for the survey and subdivision in the same proportion. At a town meeting in Woodstock meeting-house, May 15, 1695, William Bartholomew and Benjamin Sabin were appointed to join with Roxbury's Committee "in stating and settling the divided line between the inhabitants of Woodstock and Roxbury. They pitched a stake and heap of stones on the top of Wash-won-toh-minunk Hill, and a heap of stones at the foot of the hill." A line joining these points, and projected east and west, parallel to the south bound of the town, was laid down and accepted as the dividing line between the two sections. A highway, four rods wide, was laid out upon the line. Roxbury's committee then proceeded to lay out her land in nine parallel ranges, running north from this highway to about the centre of the tract. The first range, containing thirty-four lots, lay "on the right hand of the path leading to Woodstock,"—probably the old Connecticut Path—and abutted south on the lines, "which divide between the land of the first goers or settlers, and that of the stayers or other inhabitants of Roxbury." The second range, west of the first, contained twenty-one lots. The third comprised seventeen lots and ten acres for the mill. The fourth

range was laid out in fifteen lots; the fifth in fifteen; the sixth in eleven; the seventh in five; the eighth in eleven; the ninth in seven; making in all one hundred and forty-two. These shares differed in extent, according to the quality of the land and the rate paid by the proprietor. A highway, four rods wide, was laid out between each range, with cross roads between the lots wherever thought needful. The lots "were drawn at a town-meeting, appointed for that end," April 26, 1695, and the division completed and report entered February 26, 1696. The cost of this survey and division was £27. 6s. 9d. The balance of over fifty pounds, still due to Woodstock, was then paid over and all accounts and differences harmoniously settled. Part of the money received from Roxbury by Woodstock was immediately applied to paying arrearages to the minister, who was thus enabled "to renounce all claims for himself and heirs against the inhabitants of Woodstock by reason of his salary for preaching and teaching them, from the beginning of the world till May 6, 1696." The remainder was divided among the inhabitants according as they had home-lots or had paid town charges—John Carpenter, Nathaniel Johnson, Sen., John Holmes and John Chandler, Jun., making distribution of the same.

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## V.

### INDIAN TROUBLES.

AT the close of her first decade, Woodstock had made very creditable progress. Few colonies of that day had enjoyed greater advantages—the free gift of an ample and fertile country, money sufficient for the most pressing public outlays, the oversight and protection of a powerful and established township—and she had suffered no hardships or privations but such as were incident to a frontier settlement at that early period. But now, when with differences settled, lands confirmed and church established, she was about to inaugurate more extensive improvements, she was called to pass through a long season of trouble and calamity.

The war between England and France exposed the New England Colonies to Indian irruptions and barbarities. Bands of Mohawks ravaged the woods, committing the most shocking atrocities. A feeling of insecurity and alarm pervaded every community. Isolated frontier settlements, like this of Woodstock, were especially exposed and

guarded. Watch-houses were strengthened, scouts maintained, and a military company formed, with Peter Aspinwall for lieutenant and John Chandler, Jun., for ensign. The leading military spirit in this day of darkness and peril was, however, John Sabin, of Mashamoquet, a bold and active pioneer—probably brother or cousin of Deacon Benjamin Sabin—who had established himself just south of Woodstock line a few years previous, built himself a house with fortifications, and gained great influence and authority over the Wabbaquassets.

Its first serious alarm befell Woodstock, August 26, 1696. A band of marauding Mohawks fell suddenly upon the neighboring settlement of Oxford—settled years before by a colony of French Huguenots. John Johnson, returning home from a visit in Woodstock, was shot down dead on his own door-step. His three children, playing about the room, were seized and dashed against the chimney jamb. A neighbor, John Evans, was also killed. Mrs. Johnson managed to escape by the aid of her brother, Andrew Sigourney, who dragged her out of the house by a back passage and down the banks of the adjacent river, where they cowered till nightfall, and then made their way as best they could to Woodstock. The inhabitants were aroused at break of day by the arrival of these fugitives with their heavy tidings. The news was spread through the different settlements, filling them with alarm and terror. The savages might at any moment burst upon them. Their defences were slight, ammunition scanty, their own Indians doubtful. The whole population—men, women and children—hastened within their fortifications. Posts were at once dispatched to Lieutenant General Stoughton, commander of the Massachusetts forces, and to Major James Fitch, at Norwich. The day and night were spent in watching and terror, but before morning the arrival of Major Fitch, with his brother Daniel, a few English soldiers and a band of Pequots and Mohegans somewhat allayed apprehensions. No enemy had been seen, but it was rumored that they had divided into small companies and were lurking about the woods. It was proposed to leave a sufficient number of men for the defence of Woodstock and send the others to range for the marauders. The Wabbaquassets eagerly welcomed Major Fitch as their friend and master, and offered to join the Mohegans in this congenial service. The Woodstock authorities would gladly have employed them, but could not supply them with ammunition according to the laws of Massachusetts. To refuse their offer at this critical juncture, or to send them forth without proper ammunition, might enrage and forever alienate them, while conciliation and indulgence might make them the firm friends and allies of Woodstock. Under these circumstances, Major Fitch took the responsibility of employing and equipping these Indians. Calling



them all together, he took their names, and found twenty-nine fighting men—twenty-five native Wabbaquassetts and four Shetucketts married to Wabbaquasset wives. Eighteen Wabbaquassetts and twenty-three Mohegans then sallied out under Captain Daniel Fitch, to range through Massachusetts, with a commission from Major Fitch, as magistrate and military officer, asking all plantations to which they might come for supplies and accommodations. Scarcely had they gone forth when four strange Indians were discovered at the west end of the town, but whether enemies or not they could not tell. At evening, a scout from Providence arrived, "being the Captain, with fourteen men, who had been out two days northward of Mendon and Oxford but made no discovery." Captain Fitch and his company were equally unsuccessful, and the invading Mohawks effected their escape uninjured. A consultation was held as to the best mode of defending Woodstock. The Wabbaquassetts would "not be ordered by any but by virtue of authority from Connecticut," and yet "they could not venture the case to be without them." Major Fitch placed them under the charge of Captain John Sabin, "who, beyond dispute, was in Connecticut Colony," to be at the command of the authorities of Woodstock as they saw cause to employ them, and if they were not serviceable promised "to take them off by virtue of an order from the General Court of Connecticut." In a brief note to Lieutenant Governor Stoughton, Major Fitch explained the situation, and urged the importance of conciliating these Indians, and his own concern for this "poor, afflicted, distressed country."

From this time, there was no peace or security in Woodstock. Alarms and panics were of frequent occurrence. Some of its settlers returned to Roxbury. "Upon information that several of its inhabitants had removed, and others were preparing to do so, whereby the duty of watching, searching and scouting would be too heavy upon those that remained and endanger the safety of the place, it being an out plantation," the General Assembly ordered, October, 1696, "That Woodstock be accounted a frontier, and comprehended within the Act to prevent the deserting of the frontier." By this Act, inhabitants of frontier towns were prohibited from leaving these towns without special license under very severe penalties.

Mr. Dwight remained bravely at his post, and did much to encourage the people during this period. Lieutenant Peter Aspinwall and other young men went out as scouts with parties of Indians. John Chandier, Jun., was appointed superintendent of the Wabbaquassetts and Mohegans by the Massachusetts government, and directed them "where to hunt and what sign to wear that they might not be exposed by meeting with English scouts," while Captain Sabin made himself

very serviceable by engaging many Wabbaquassets in the interests of the English and keeping whole families within his fortifications while the men were out at service. It was during this period of alarm and perturbation that the town found it needful on some occasion to treat itself with eight shillings' worth "of drink, to be paid by James Corbin with the town money then in his hand, and accordingly it was performed." Attendance at town meetings became so remiss and irregular that it was voted, "That any one refusing or neglecting to attend should pay a fine of one and six-pence—six-pence for not appearing at the time appointed, and an additional six-pence for every hour's absence." No public improvements were attempted during the war.

After a brief interval of quiet, troubles broke out anew early in 1700. Captain Sabin observed many suspicious indications, and mysterious hints were dropped by certain Indians. A meeting was held at Crystal Pond, ostensibly for fishing, which was attended by most of the Indians, but after several days' absence they came back without fish, and a few days afterward they started off again, with squaws and children and the treasure of the tribe, "pretending fear and danger from the Mohegans." Fears were at this time entertained throughout the Colonies of a general combination and uprising among the various Indian tribes, and it was at once conjectured that the Wabbaquassets had gone to meet the combined forces at Monadnock and join in a general foray. A panic ensued. Dispatches were sent at once to the Governor and Council of Connecticut, who sent to their relief Captain Samuel Mason, with twelve English soldiers and eighteen Mohegans. Arriving at Woodstock at 2 P. M., Saturday, February 3, they found the people in great excitement. James Corbin's cart, laden with ammunition, was on the road from Boston in great danger of interception and capture by the enemy. News had come that the fugitives traveled sixteen miles the first night, though divers children were much frozen, and one man nearly drowned in crossing a river. A consultation was held with Mr. Dwight, Captain Sabin and the principal men of Woodstock, who thought it best to send for the Indians to return and assure them of their friendship and protection. Three Wabbaquassets, "of great faithfulness to the English"—Kinsodock, Mookheag and Pesicus—were accordingly sent on Sunday to Colonel King, of Dunstable, with a note from Captain Mason, praying him "to forward them on their journey to Penacook or Monadnuk, where, as we understand, the combined Indians keep their head-quarters, or to any other place where our Indians are gone, and if there be with you any Indians it may be well to send some with them, that they may fully inform the Indians that the English have no designs against them, and that if Tobey himself

should return he would have courteous treatment showed him." A pass was given to these envoys, forbidding people to take their arms from them. A dispatch was also sent to Lord Bellmont, governor of Massachusetts, by John Ingalls, of Oxford, showing their fear of approaching evil from the enemy, and the aid sent from Connecticut.

Whether Mr. Dwight was able to hold religious services on this disturbed Sabbath is very doubtful. News came during the day that James Corbin's cart was approaching, and sixty men with arms went out to meet it and brought it in with great rejoicing. Monday was spent in collecting information and arranging defences. Six Mohegans were detailed to remain in Woodstock, under care of Captain Sabin—the friendly Wabbaquassets offering to contribute to their maintenance and find them room in their wigwams, and also to "take charge of the children and concerns of those sent to Dunstable." James Corbin was desired not to dispose of any ammunition to any Indian but with the approbation of Captain Sabin or Mr. Dwight. Having thus provided for the safety and defence of Woodstock, leaving every man well equipped with arms and in good capacity to make resistance, Captain Mason "took leave of friends" there on Monday morning, promising to send up six Pequots and desiring word to be sent to New London as soon and often as anything offered. Nothing is known of the result of Kinsodock's mission, but it is evident that the combination, if planned, was not completed, nor the apprehended "resurrection and revolt" effected. The absconding Wabbaquassets probably returned to their homes and Woodstock enjoyed another brief interval of peace.

In 1702, France and England resumed hostilities, and the Indians were again thrown into a ferment. During this war, alarms and assaults were frequent, and the frontier settlements greatly disturbed. Major Fitch was appointed by the government of Connecticut to order forces for the safety of its upper towns, and again visited Woodstock, June 9, 1704. He found the people poorly provided and much exposed; the women and children all gathered into garrisons, with but one man to guard them. The other inhabitants were out scouting or in their fields at labor. The families on the westward hill he found in very difficult and disheartening circumstances, being too remote to come into town and having no adequate fortifications. The Major decided to leave fifteen men for the defence of the place, to serve alternately as scout and guard—that there might be fresh men to march—and desired the government of Massachusetts to provide "the standing part at y<sup>e</sup> several garrisons as to dyet, and y<sup>e</sup> marching part with supper and breakfast when they come in." With this provision, he thought the place would be sufficiently protected so that the inhabitants "could go

about their business and somewhat safely follow their occasions." In behalf of the west hill inhabitants, he asked to have a garrison allowed them. Massachusetts complied with this proposition, at least as to the subsisting of the scout, and the soldiers remained on guard till the following January, and apparently prevented any further panic or outbreak.

## VI.

### IMPORTANT CHANGES. FINAL DIVISION OF ROXBURY'S HALF OF WOODSTOCK.

**D**URING these years of strife and confusion, Woodstock made little progress. Her population diminished, her public affairs were neglected, her common lands were left unfenced, her highways overgrown with bushes and her mill-house fell into such a state of dilapidation "that the bad weather did often spoil both bags and corn." As musty and sour meal was no better than gritty, Deacon Sabin, Matthew Davis and Benjamin Griggs were sent by the town to treat with Mr. Bartholomew, who promised as soon as it was good weather to set the mill in good repair and make up the mill-house sufficient for the benefit of the town." In 1700, a cart-bridge was built over Muddy Brook by Goodman Eastmans. In 1703, Deacon Sabin agreed to fence the burying-place, and it was voted, "that a piece of land formerly improved by an Indian, John Aquaticus, who pays rent, should, for the town's benefit, be a school for ever." After 1704, Indian alarms subsided, though scouts were still maintained in the woods, "as there was necessity and occasion," and loads of wood for the watch were included among the town expenditures. Public improvements now received more attention. In 1704, the first school-house was built on the common, near the meeting-house—the first schoolmaster reported is John Picker; the second, Thomas Lyon. At the first town meeting held in the new school-house, John Holmes proposed to leave out of fence a piece of land westward of his sawmill, for a common forever, provided the town let him have the benefit of a certain parcel of apple trees upon the tract and allowed him two acres for one, elsewhere. This proposition was accepted, and thus South Woodstock was provided with its common. Seats for men and boys were ordered in the meeting-house and the deacons empowered to attend to its seating, with the "assistance of any one of the inhabitants they may choose."



Cattle and birds were now looked after. The useful clay-pits had become dangerous pit-falls. The selectmen were enjoined "to keep them well filled up, so that no more of our creatures be lost in them," and a law was passed, "That if any person lowered down the fence or draw-bridge in going in or out for clay, whereby loss or damage ensued, he should be liable to damages." As the great number of birds were thought to endanger the crops, it was voted, "That every inhabitant capable of voting should bring in twenty-four blackbirds' heads to the town treasury, before Michaelmas, on penalty of a penny a head for the number lacking." A penny a head was afterwards allowed for blackbirds and "sixpence a dozen for yolo-birds." Rewards for killing wolves were paid occasionally.

The loss in population was slowly recovered. Private proprietorship discouraged immigration. There was little available land to be purchased. The owners of the south half kept their shares for division among their families. The northern half was but partially laid out and still unsubdued. In its first twenty years, Woodstock received very few new settlers. The lapse of time brought the usual changes. The fathers passed away and the sons took their places. Nathaniel Johnson died in 1697; John Butcher, in 1699; Deacon John Chandler, in 1703. Butcher's right in Woodstock was purchased by Samuel Paine.

Deacon Chandler's estate was valued at £512. 0s. 6d. He left his house and homestead and a double portion of his estate to his eldest son, John; his lands in Mashamoquet—now Pomfret—to his youngest son, Joseph. Captain John Chandler returned with his family to Woodstock after his father's death, but was still much occupied in land surveys and operations in Connecticut. No man was so much concerned in the early settlement of Windham County. The different towns were laid out by him, and nearly every farm in them. He owned large tracts of land in Killingly, Pomfret and Ashford, and indeed was only exceeded by Major Fitch in the extent of his landed possessions. The land between Woodstock and the Quinebaug was purchased by him, and sold to a company of Woodstock proprietors. In 1705, he was employed by the parties interested in the Mohegan land claim, in making a survey and map of that disputed territory. At home he was constantly employed in public services. All important commissions and negotiations were entrusted to him. He was superintendent of the Indians and all their affairs. He was the first, and long the only representative sent by Woodstock to the General Court, and was honored at home and abroad as the leading citizen of this section of Massachusetts.

In 1707, Woodstock's eastern boundary-line was run and the line

between the divisions stated and perfected by Captain Chandler, at the request and cost of the two townships. Beginning at a walnut tree west of Muddy Brook, he ran the line over North-running, Gravel and Bunggee Brooks and Black Pond to the western bound of the town. Eastward, from Muddy Brook, the line crossed Jabez Corbin's field, Washwontohminunk Hill and thence to the east bound "near twenty rods east of a brook which runs out of a pine swamp." Deacon Edward Morris and Benjamin Griggs, who had acted as agents for Roxbury in this work, were farther employed, with Jacob Parker, to prevent the disturbance of Roxbury's timber, with power to prosecute such as should cut or carry it off. Soon after this formal statement of line, settlers are believed to have entered upon the north half of Woodstock.

This increase of population in the northern half of Woodstock was nearly counterbalanced by decrease in the south. Many citizens of Woodstock removed into the regions beyond them and helped build up the northern towns of Windham County. Both deacons of the church—Benjamin Sabin, one of the "old thirteen," and John Carpenter, successor to Deacon Chandler—removed in 1705 to the new settlement of Mashamoquet. Nathaniel Gary, Nathaniel Sanger, John Hubbard, John Lyon, George Griggs, Samuel Paine, Jun., and Samuel Perrin, Jun., all removed to that attractive plantation at about this period. Peter Aspinwall and the sons of John Leavens were the first pioneers and planters of Killingly. Samuel Rice, Philip Eastman, Arthur Humphrey and other sons of Woodstock helped to lay the foundations of Ashford. A large part of this latter township was purchased by James Corbin, who still continued his trading operations, supplied the new settlements with cider and other liquors, and gathered such quantities of "deer-skins, bear-skins, beaver and other furs," that he had "much ado" to get them conveyed to the Great Street in Boston, his cart, drawn by four oxen and four horses, breaking down often in the rough roads between Woodstock and Mendon.

The opening of the surrounding country, if it diminished the population of Woodstock, increased its business and importance. From an isolated frontier settlement it became a flourishing centre, with communities growing up around it. Woodstock was the mother settlement, with conveniences and institutions. The inhabitants of the border towns made use of the mills, patronized its shop, participated in its trainings, frequented its house of worship and claimed a share of its minister. In December, 1703, complaint was made in town meeting "that the Borderers neglect to pay a suitable proportion of Mr. Dwight's salary, though they frequent the house of God and have nowhere else to repair unto for the same," and it was voted, "That an



obligation be drawn up and carried by a committee both in Mashamoquet and Killingly to subscribe unto what they will pay for Mr. Dwight's present salary, and such as shall not subscribe or continue without paying the same, shall be complained of to the authorities of Connecticut." Samuel Paine and Nathaniel Sanger were appointed the following year "To go to the Borderers and see what they will subscribe for Mr. Dwight's salary."

The growth of these new settlements made better traveling accommodations desirable, and stimulated Woodstock to greater enterprise. Mendon was invited "To make a bridge over Medfield River," and the General Court—"To bridge the great meadows between us and Mendon." A road was laid out, in 1708, through Woodstock, from Medfield, Massachusetts, to Enfield, Connecticut. As the way cut through the swamps by Peter Aspinwall, to Providence, was but a rude bridle-path, the selectmen of Woodstock invited those of Killingly to join with them in petitioning Providence town council to lay out a road through their township to the Quinebaug. October 9, 1710, John Holmes and Jonathan Peake were directed "to meet committees from Killingly and Mashamoquet, at sun an hour high at farthest, on Friday next if it be fair, if not the next fair day—to advise and state a suitable place on Quinebaug River, where it may be most commodious for a bridge, that the road to Providence may be laid to that part of the river." The road was laid out between Muddy Brook and the Quinebaug, crossing the latter river, as at present, just below the Falls and above the junction of the rivers, but no permanent bridge was erected for ten or twelve years.

With these great works in progress, smaller affairs were not neglected. The selectmen were enjoined "to obtain a suitable person or persons to keep a school or schools to teach children to read, write and cypher, till the first of March; after that by a woman or women." In 1710, two new school-houses were ordered; one near John Childs' corner, at South Woodstock; one near Joseph Bacon's:—Samuel Perrin, Smith Johnson, William Lyon and John Morse a committee to build them. In October following, Deacon Edward Morris was empowered "to obtain Thomas Lyon to keep school two months at the north, and Stephen Sabin two months at the south of the town, provided they require not above nine shillings a week." In 1710, John Holmes received from the town, in acknowledgment of his public services, a grant of the Falls, thirty rods below his house and the mill, and liberty on the west side the brook to the Falls. A fulling-mill, soon after established here by Mr. Holmes, was a great public benefit. In 1712, he was also "chosen and desired to make coffins as there may be occasion." William Lyon, at the same time, accepted the office of

grave digger—"he to have two shillings per grave for five years and under; three shillings between twelve and five; five shillings for all persons above twelve years—he finding tools and giving suitable attendance and making the graves a suitable depth."

In 1710, a new division of land was surveyed and laid out by Captain Chandler—thirty-seven proprietors receiving fifty-four shares. Few of the original proprietors were present at this distribution, many were represented by their sons—Peter Aspinwall's share had passed to John Childs; Benjamin Sabin's to John Marcy and Jonathan Payson; John Bowen's to James Horsman; Nathaniel Garey's to Thomas Eaton. Captain Chandler had bought and held several shares. It was voted, "That the lands still undivided on the east end of the town to the town line shall abide as common land forever, or till the town dispose of them." It was also agreed to petition the General Court for an enlargement of the town to Quinebaug River. The fee of this land was now purchased of Captain Chandler.

The final division and distribution of the remaining land in the north half of Woodstock was next accomplished, Roxbury, in 1711, voting, "That these lands should be divided as soon as may be." A meeting of Woodstock proprietors was held in Roxbury, May 6, 1713, when it was agreed, "That all the undivided common lands lying in the old town's half, fit and useful to be divided, be forthwith as soon as conveniently may be, divided and apportioned to and amongst the several proprietors, according to their several proportions." William Dudley, Captain Joshua Lamb and Edward Bridges were appointed a committee to bring in proposals for the division and good management of said lands. William Dudley was sworn as proprietors' clerk. The proprietors again met, May 19, when the following proposals were submitted and accepted:—

1. That there be two divisions of land, if the same be fit; if not, one of upland and another of swamps and meadows.
2. Proprietors to draw lots.
3. To allow quantity for quality.
4. That it be left to the Committee's judgment to decide when to begin.
5. That there be a distinct division of swamps and meadows to every proprietor.
6. That the committee should lay out and establish roads and ways.
7. That Captain Samuel Ruggles, Edmond Dorr and John Holbrook be a committee to levy charges and disbursements that shall arrive on these divisions when they are drawn and adjusted, on the several proprietors, according to their proportions, and receive the same according to the rate or assessment, and pay out the same according to the account of charges when given in by the committee that shall divide the land.
8. That all the proprietors shall pay their several rates or proportion of the charges to the said committee, appointed to levy and receive the same, in twenty days after the same is levied and published, on the penalty of losing the several shares or lots in their divisions, not excluding any persons that shall be orphans or widows or absent by the providence of God.
9. That the school-lot shall be free of all charges.

10. Committee to inquire into pretended claims.
11. That this day nine weeks, after lecture, the proprietors draw lots.
12. The committee is instructed to show neither favour or affection in the discharge of their trust, but to deal faithfully and uprightly according to their best skill and judgment.
13. That the papers should be put into the clerk's hands.
14. That notifications for meetings should be put up in public places.
15. The committee to be allowed five shillings a day.
16. Assessors, two and sixpence a day.
17. No other lot to be allowed for mill.

The committee promptly fulfilled their instructions, laying out the remaining land in twelve ranges, "all conformable to Mr. Butcher's work," with highways corresponding with those previously allowed. On the appointed day, July 21, 1713, the proprietors drew lots for their respective portions, having previously voted, "That the lots, viz., a hundred and forty-two in number, be the only ones to be drawn for the three divisions of swamps, meadows and upland. and that the proprietors draw but once for the three divisions." On account of the slope of the east bound of the town and perhaps, also, the intrusion of meadow land in its vicinity, the first range now laid out was made to conform with the *third* of the previous division. This first range comprised twenty-one lots, 167 rods in width, beginning at the north bound of the town, and running south till it met the third range, with a highway four rods wide at the west end, and one of six rods between the twenty-first lot and third range. The second range, meeting the fourth, was laid out in ten lots, leaving a piece of common or undivided land on the north of 298 acres. The third was bounded north by the north bound of the town, and comprised twelve lots, 160 rods wide, together with Maple Island meadow and 202 acres of common land at the south end adjoining the fifth range. The fourth range, abutting on the sixth, with a highway on the west, as in the preceding ranges, was laid out in twelve lots, 172 rods wide, with 107 acres left common. The fifth range comprised twenty lots, 170 rods wide, bounding south on the seventh range, with a four-rod highway on the *east*, thus making a highway eight rods wide, passing from north to south through or near the centre of the town. A four-rod highway was also allowed on the west of this range. The 57th lot, laid out to George and James Griggs, was almost half taken up by Muddy Brook Pond. The 58th was reserved for a school. A lot of 124 acres was also reserved for public uses. The sixth range, bounded south on last lot of eighth, and contained eleven lots, and common land on north bounds. The seventh, abutting on the ninth, had also eleven lots, with a highway on the east and common at the north. The eighth range began at the dividing line between the Goers and Stayers, with a four-rod highway between and a highway on the east. It was divided into ten lots, and fell short of the north bound of the town by 856 rods of land, unfit for division.

The ninth extended from common on the north to dividing line, and comprised but six lots, with Pine Swamp meadow and ten acres for common at the south. The tenth range extended from north boundary line to the Great Cedar swamp, with highway on each side, and included nine lots. The eleventh began some rods from north line, "land near which not being fit for division," and contained eleven lots. The twelfth and last range began at the dividing line between Goers and Stayers, and was bounded east by highway, west and north by the bounds of the town. The ninth lot of this range, and one hundred and forty-second of the division, was drawn by Ralph Bradhurst. Governors Wait, Winthrop, and Joseph Dudley received the largest number of acres. Many of these shares were appropriated by old Woodstock settlers, who had bought up Roxbury rights and assigned them to their sons. Edward Morris, John Holmes, Henry Bowen, John Bugbee, Thomas Bacon, Edward Chamberlain, Jonathan Peake, John Payson, together with numerous Lyons, Mays, Frizzels, Davises and Johnsons, thus became proprietors in the north half of Woodstock. Some time passed before the land was made over. Further instructions were found needful. At a meeting of proprietors, November 9, 1714, it was voted:—

1. Upon consideration of the difficulty and damage of laying out the meadows distinct and in a particular division, according to a former vote, it is therefore at this time voted, That all the swamps and meadows, except what is hereinafter excepted, be laid out with the uplands and accounted as such in the after allotments and divisions.

2. That Senexsett, Maple Island, Pine Swamp and May's meadows be sold—the proprietors to have the first offer—in order to the defraying the charges of laying out the lands, and that no particular propriety shall buy above five acres.

The assessors previously appointed were now made a committee for disposing of the meadows, and the standing committee empowered to agree with persons for the convenience of a way from the second range to the Country or Connecticut Road, allowing undivided lands in recompense for damage. It was also ordered, "That the cedar swamp be left distinct and excepted from this present division, and be under restrictions and reservations from any persons cutting any timber there without leave had from the committee or persons appointed to inspect and take care of said swamp."

"At a meeting held in the old meeting-house of Roxbury, March 14, 1715, it was further voted:—

1. What has been already done sufficient and nothing further necessary at present to be done as to these lots.

2. Deacon Morris, with surveyor, perfect the lines of first range and second and third lots, not quite finished.

3. Major John Bowles, a committee for disposal of meadows, in room of Captain Ruggles, deceased.

4. If any error or mistake shall be found, persons injured shall have due satisfaction."



September 22, 1715, the ranges of lots were formally entered and allotments distributed to the numerous proprietors. The meadows were laid out as directed and sold at public auction. Senexsett meadow, east of the first range, was divided into twenty-six five-acre lots, and was purchased mainly by Roxbury residents—owners of lots not to hinder flowing of the meadow by making dams. Pine Island meadow was allowed to Edward Sumner and three others; Connecticut or May's meadow to Jacob Pepper and three others. Maple Island meadow was purchased by Hon. Joseph Dudley, John Holbrook, Thomas Baker and John Pike's heirs. Governor Dudley also bought out shares of Senexsett. Purchasers of the meadows were ordered to appear at the Gray-hound in Roxbury, June 26, 1716, "in order to pay the money promised for the same." Few appearing on the day appointed, the committee allowed one month more "when some more came and others refused or neglected." The committee then allowed till September 4, "that all might come and no person complain for lack of time." The money was paid and all accounts settled in November. Roxbury's interest and title in Woodstock had now passed into the hands of individuals. At a final meeting, March 26, 1717, the proprietors voted, "That the whole records and concernment of the Woodstock lands be fairly recorded and transcribed into another book of records and kept distinct, to prevent any unforeseen calamity;—after which the meeting ended."

The western part of the south half of Woodstock was laid out in 1715. Forty-four hundred acres were laid out in four ranges, running from north to south, and distributed among the proprietors. John Holmes, who had died in 1713, was represented by his son, David. Philip Eastman and Joseph Frizzel were represented by their heirs. The northern and western parts of Woodstock were thus thrown open to settlement, and cultivation and population more widely disseminated. The final settlement of the disputed boundary question also added to the strength and stability of Woodstock. Commissioners, appointed by the governments of Massachusetts and Connecticut in 1713, re-surveyed and stated the boundary line between their colonies, with the previous stipulation, that towns already settled should remain to their respective governments. A new line was run from Wrentham Plains due westward, and the whole of Woodstock, as was expected, fell to the south of it, but according to the compact was still held by Massachusetts. Fifty thousand acres of land in the west part of Massachusetts were allowed to Connecticut as an equivalent for this territory. The township of Woodstock willingly acquiesced in this arrangement, and doubtless preferred, at this period, to remain under the government which had settled it.

## VII.

## UNEASINESS WITH MR. DWIGHT. SECOND MEETING-HOUSE.

OF Woodstock church, during these years all record is lacking, but it probably kept pace with the town in growth and prosperity. All land-owners were compelled by law to pay for the support of the gospel; all inhabitants were expected and obliged to attend public service, and probably all were connected with the church either by profession or owning the covenant. The prosperity of the church may have been somewhat marred by an "uneasiness" with the minister. The relation between pastor and people was far from satisfactory. With good abilities and education and much energy of character, Mr. Dwight was eccentric and erratic, rash in temper and speech, and somewhat willful and overbearing. His sermons, though sound and vigorous, abounded in odd conceits and ludicrous comparisons: "A single grain of grace in the heart was worth more than the best load of hay ever carried from Roxbury to Boston." "If unconverted men ever got to heaven, they would feel as uneasy as a shad up the crotch of a white oak." These eccentricities of Mr. Dwight greatly annoyed his ministerial associates, and once, it is said, "induced several to join in an admonitory visit to the offender. Mr. Dwight received these reproofs with great meekness, frankly acknowledged his faults and promised amendment, but in prayer at parting, after returning thanks for the brotherly visit and admonitions, hoped "that they might so hitch their horses together on earth that they should never kick in the stables of everlasting salvation."

Troubles concerning the payment of the salary began at an early period. Whatever the faults of the pastor may have been, it is evident that the people were equally blamable. It was a rude, rough age, and the Woodstock settlers were not in advance of it. Thirty years residence in an isolated frontier settlement may have strengthened their characters, but it had not softened their manners, and there is abundant evidence that their treatment of their pastor was marked by great lack of delicacy and consideration. "Wants, wars and diversity of words" embittered the life of the minister. His small salary was never promptly or fully paid. In 1703, he accepts ten acres of land in lieu of arrearages, "that we may have quiet." In addition to the right of land secured to him in settlement, Mr. Dwight rented and cultivated the land reserved for the support of the ministry. The town, as ready to exact as slow to communicate, at the end of seven years, sent a committee to examine and take possession, which reported, "That he had not cleared the meadow and fenced the land according



to lease ; had broken up and improved one and a half acres, and had eight crops for which the town had received no satisfaction ; also, land had been measured and found over-measurement, and that he still owed half a crown of rent-money." In 1714, the town voted, not to allow the improvement of the ministry land to Mr. Dwight—Captain John Chandler dissenting. Still, with all this bickering and jealousy, there was much regard for the pastor and no thought of severing the connection.

The Woodstock meeting-house had now become extremely dilapidated and quite inadequate to the wants of the congregation. In 1713, a committee was appointed "to order and direct the repairing, amending, making or altering the seats in the meeting-house." Proposals for purchasing a bell were received, consideration of them deferred "till next training-day" and then rejected. In 1717, Messrs. Peak, Deming and Carpenter were appointed "in regard of their skill and experience in the carpentry trade, to view the meeting-house, whether to enlarge, repair or new-build," who reported, "That repairs were impracticable and that it will be most profitable as well as most accommodable to build a new house." The town accepted this report, with thanks, and at the next town-meeting, March 8, debated the location. "Twenty-three were for continuing it where it was first placed or near it ; seventeen, for setting it near the upper school-house ; one, by the burial-place ; some neutral." The town voted "To build as soon as may be ; dimensions, not less than forty-six feet long, thirty-seven wide, twenty-two high." Captain John Chandler, John Peak and William Lyon were appointed "to provide materials at the best they can and as much for the ease of the people, and not to hurry the work too fast." This latter caution was quite superfluous, as nearly three years passed before it was even begun. The people were unable to agree upon the location. As quite a number of settlers had now gathered in the north half of Woodstock, a letter was written to them, "relating to moving the meeting-house more northerly," if they would bear their proportion of expenses, but no return was made to it, and the question was left to the decision of the south inhabitants. The Woodstock Hill residents favored a more westerly location ; those in the eastward vale sought its removal to their vicinity. A majority of three, in 1717, agreed to set the meeting-house "near the present spot or within twenty rods of the burial ground." At the meeting next following, twenty-three voted for a location "by the burying-place ; eighteen by the pond" in the eastward vale ; ten persons dissented for various causes. Some of the meetings were very turbulent. On one occasion, after a warm debate, it was proposed to take the vote by the pond-party going to one side the meeting-house and the burial-

ground party the other. A majority of three was obtained by the latter, but one vote was pronounced illegal, and while debating this point "five others broke away" and the whole vote was lost.

After two years of wrangling and confusion, a better spirit appeared. At a general town-meeting, December 14, 1719, Mr. Dwight was sent for to pray with the town. All previous action was then annulled, and it was voted, "That a committee of three men out of town should decide the point." Samuel Paine, Smith Johnson and Benjamin Griggs from the south part of the town, and William Lyon, James Corbin and Jonathan Payson from Plaine Hill, were then chosen "to remonstrate to the committee from abroad the circumstances of the town and the arguments they have to offer as to which place they think best, and to write to such committee, provide for and pay them." Joshua Ripley and John Fitch, of Windham, and Eleazer Bateman, of Killingly, were the committee selected, who decided, December 28, "in favor of burying-place spot." William Lyon, Eliphalet Carpenter and John Chandler, Jun., were immediately appointed a committee for building, and preparations for the work began in earnest. Samuel Morris, a younger brother of Deacon Edward, residing east of Woodstock, "came into the meeting and desired that he might build with us and offered to pay ten pounds." In March, 1720, the committee were ordered "to provide stone for under-pinning and get the house framed as soon as they have a prospect of being supplied with boards." The raising was accomplished in April with due feasting and hilarity, the committee being charged "to use their best prudence in the provision they make, that it be done with frugality and honor, charge borne by the public."

After the raising, the work went on rapidly. The inhabitants of this leading established town were greatly interested in this, their second house of worship, and ambitious to surpass anything yet seen in their part of the country. Very particular and detailed instructions were given to the committee, and especial attention enjoined to style and ornament. A pulpit was built of suitable size, the work quarter-round wainscot and fluted pilasters each side its window. The deacons' seat, sounding-board and minister's pew were of the same work as the pulpit,—the minister's pew at the east end of the pulpit; at the west end were stairs with banisters, and the communion-table in front. A body of seats was placed in the centre of the house, the fore part quarter round wainscot and the hind part plain. The lower windows were cased "after the present fashion," the walls ceiled with boards to the foot of the lower windows. Knot-holes, cracks and partings of the board were filled with tempered clay mortar as high as the lower girths. Six pillars, of a suitable size, were turned and

set in suitable places under the gallery. A breast-work of timber was set up in front of the gallery, its stairs were half-pilastered and wholly banistered, the floor was laid above and below and all "done workman-like." The space around the walls was reserved for pews. The old meeting-house was pulled down as soon as the new one was covered, and its materials appropriated.

April 13, 1721, the committee reported the house in fair way to completion, and liberty was granted by the town to sixteen persons to build pews, the minister's serving for standard. "Captain John Chandler had liberty to build a pew for himself and family next to the pulpit stairs." Following him in order, were Samuel Morris, John Chandler, Jun., Samuel Perrin, Jabez Corbin, John Marcy, Deacon Edward Morris, Deacon John Johnson, James Corbin, Eliph. Carpenter, Jonathan Payson, Joseph Bartholomew, Edmund Chamberlain, Joseph Lyon, Zeckariah Richards, and John Morse. The house was probably used for divine service after this date, but some time passed before its completion. In 1723, the town ordered that steps be made to the meeting-house. Manasseh Horsmor having presented the town with an iron bolt and staples for the west door of the meeting-house, "the same was kindly received by the town and ordered to be put on, that it may be kept shut in windy and uncomfortable weather." Two years later more explicit instructions were voted:—

"Resolved, that the several doors of the meeting-house be taken care of and kept shut in very cold and windy seasons, according to the lying of the wind from time to time; and that people in such windy weather come in at the leeward doors only, and take care that they are easily shut, so as to prevent both the breaking of the doors and the making of a noise."

In 1723, Deacon Morris was appointed "to look after the meeting-house, see that it be swept, keep the key and take care of the cushioning, for twenty shillings a year." Its seating was not accomplished till 1725, when Colonel John Chandler and the two deacons were requested to seat the congregation in the body of seats below and the first and second seat in each gallery,—rules to be observed—age, charge, usefulness. The same committee was directed "to seat and let out the hind part of the galleries to such young folks as shall desire, and be thought proper to have, the privilege of building pews."

The cost of this elaborate and expensive church edifice weighed heavily upon the Woodstock residents, and as it was customary at that day to levy a tax upon non-residents for such purposes, a town-meeting was called, January 4, 1721, to consider the matter. Captain John Chandler was chosen moderator, and the following vote carried:—

"Upon consideration of the great charge of the town in building a new meeting-house, which lies very heavy upon the inhabitants, and forasmuch as there are more than one half of the home-lots laid out in said township never yet built upon or brought under any improvement, but are kept by the owners to grow in value, who bear no part of the charge arising in the town, nor will

be persuaded to contribute to ye charge of building said meeting-house, though they have been amicably invited to come into it, and although they are likely to reap much profit in time to come by its being built, wherefore, voted, 'That the representatives of this town (for the time being) be desired and empowered in behalf of ye town to address the great and General Assembly, at their next session, by way of petition, that the lands throughout the town, belonging both to residents and non-residents, may be taxed towards building and finishing said meeting-house, to the sum of £250—selectmen to lay it.'"

In pursuance of this vote, Captain Chandler, as representative of Woodstock, presented his petition with his usual clearness and eloquence, to which Roxbury, who felt that she had already discharged every obligation to her troublesome colony, thus indignantly responded:—

"To the Hon. Court now sitting at Cambridge, June, 1721, an answer of the proprietors of the north half of Woodstock to the petition of John Chandler, Esq., in behalf of the inhabitants of Woodstock, sheweth:—

I. That they are glad to hear that the inhabitants of Woodstock have lately built a convenient and handsome building for the public worship of God, and are apt to believe such a work could not be carried on without considerable charge, but think four or five hundred pounds, at most, well laid out, might have built a very sufficient meeting-house for Woodstock, and are surprised the petitioners should mention the sum of *six hundred and seventy pounds*, since many large meeting-houses in the country, especially in the remote towns, have been built for a much less sum, and it had better become the good people of Woodstock to have first sat down and counted the cost before they had undertaken so great and chargeable a work.

II. As to what is set forth of the placing of the meeting-house to accommodate the lands of the proprietors of the north part, we answer:—

1. That they were never consulted or acquainted with the building or placing in the least before all was over.

2. The new meeting-house stands within about forty or fifty rods of the old one, and the removing it was only for the convenience of standing on higher ground and nearer the country road to Connecticut.

3. The new meeting-house does in no wise accommodate the land of proprietors in north half, being several miles distant, and the intervening land is very rough and not fit for settlement.

4. Respondents desire it may be considered that the town was a grant from the General Court, near forty years ago, to the town of Roxbury, and the town gave the south half (which is much the best) to the settlers who now petition, reserving to themselves the north half to be a township whenever they shall see meet and their circumstances will admit of settling it, and in the meantime whoever settles in the north half are to do duty to Woodstock, &c., by which it is plain that the town of Roxbury, even from the beginning, designed to be at no other charge but what respects their one half.

5. The town of Roxbury, viz., proprietors of the north half, gave one hundred pounds in silver money, settlers paying no part.

6. As to the petitioners pretending they were influenced and encouraged by the proprietors of the north half—the respondents utterly deny it; for, as before observed, there was never the least application made to them, nor will it be of any service unless they will make another remove of the meeting-house a mile or two yet northward; if any particular persons should have made any promises to the petitioners, it is hoped they will make them good.

7. The north proprietors have been at great charge already with respect to their half in laying out lots, highways, renting lands for public use, in all of which they have not been in the least assisted by the inhabitants of Woodstock—so that, on the whole, your respondents hope and doubt not that you will be of opinion that their petition is without any foundation in law, justice or equity, and ought to be dismissed.

PAUL DUDLEY.

In behalf of Roxbury proprietors."



This forcible response procured the rejection of the petition, and left the residents of Woodstock to bear their own burdens. An opportune distribution of public money among Massachusetts towns afforded some relief, Woodstock share—sixty-three pounds—being at once appropriated “to finishing the meeting-house.”

During the summer of 1721, Woodstock, with many other New England towns, suffered from that terrible visitation, small-pox—six persons, including some of her leading young men, dying of that disease.

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## VIII.

MINISTERIAL TROUBLES. INDIAN ALARMS. DEATH OF ACQUIT-  
TAMAUG. LAND DIVISIONS. DISMISSAL OF MR. DWIGHT.

WHILE the meeting-house was progressing, other town interests languished. After the rejection of their petition for a rate from Roxbury, the town “begged to be excused from sending a representative on account of the expense of meeting-house.” The meeting-house also kept them from having schools as the law provided and reduced them to one school-master, alternating monthly for four months between the north and northeast school-houses. The minister was, however, the greatest sufferer from the exactions of the meeting-house. The uneasiness between pastor and people was increasing. The small salary allowed Mr. Dwight was quite insufficient for the wants of his large family. Cut off from the ministry-land, he resorted to various devices for increasing his income, hiring and cultivating land in Woodstock, and speculating in the wild lands of Killingly—which excited much dissatisfaction and grumbling. In 1719, he petitioned for an increase of salary. The town, “complaining of great poverty and being affected with the common calamity in the general time of scarcity,” allowed him ten pounds. In 1722, the town, still complaining of “great poverty, straitness and scarcity, yet being willing to do what they could for their minister,” ordered a quarterly contribution to be taken for him. This proving insufficient, and the “uneasiness” on both sides increasing, a committee was chosen, May 22, 1723, to confer with Mr. Dwight, “who willingly submitted his case to the town, to do as they see cause, and for the future intended to be passive, but fixed in opinion that his salary ought to be enlarged, as it fell short of what he justly expected, which he attributed to the increased price to which things for the comfort and support of life have arisen, but



expected nothing for deficiencies in time past and would give the town a full discharge."

The committee "took the premises into serious consideration" and in due time reported, "That as Mr. Dwight had been with them thirty-three years on sixty pounds salary, which he says is not sufficient for his honorable support, and the great stroke of husbandry under his management to which he has been too much necessitated in time past, takes up much of his time and thoughts, therefore, advised that his salary be increased to seventy-five pounds." The town accepted the report, and voted that the above sum be assessed for him and requested the selectmen to acquaint him with this vote, and "instruct him moreover to devote himself more especially to his sacred functions that they may be encouraged by his vigorous performance for the future, either to continue this said sum or to enlarge it." James Corbin alone dissented from this vote—"the covenant having been complied with and not seeing cause to exceed it."

Other town matters received but little attention. Roads and bridges were left unmended; cattle and birds unmolested; but either wolves or hunters were increasing and wolf-rates much more frequently demanded—now to pay "a wolf-bill" to Jonathan Payson and then for "three grown wolves to Joseph Bartholomew." To prevent charges from vagrants or chance residents the town voted, March 12, 1723, "That if any person entertain or hire any stranger or transient person, except for nursing or other inevitable occasion, they shall give good security to the selectmen of the town that they shall not be burthened or charged with them, or forfeit ten shillings a week for four weeks and then twenty shillings."

Town meetings at this period were conducted with much formality. The Colony laws against drunkenness, profaneness and immorality, together with the act for reformation of manners, were always read at the opening. Captain John Chandler—still town-clerk and treasurer—was also moderator at its meetings. Training-days were observed with much hilarity and spirit, and military organization maintained in accordance with the laws of Massachusetts.

In public matters, Woodstock now was chiefly interested in the formation of a new county. Included in Suffolk County, all its land deeds had to be recorded, its wills proven in Boston. Captain John Chandler was the first to initiate a movement for a new county organization, and in 1720 presented a petition to the General Court "for the erection of a new county in the south of Massachusetts, to be called Worcester." A bill to this effect was presented, "read twice, and ordered to be considered next session" and then indefinitely deferred.

In 1722, the peace of the country was again disturbed by the renewal of Indian alarms and hostilities, which continued some years. The senior John Chandler, first as major and then as colonel, served actively in successive campaigns. His son, William, also served as captain. Woodstock was not apparently exposed to attacks and was able to extend aid to the towns north of her. A company of scouts, raised mostly in Woodstock and Pomfret by Major Chandler, guarded the frontier from August to November, 1722. The Indians in the Reservation north of Woodstock occasioned some alarm and were not allowed to live in the woods by themselves, but were drawn in and placed under the conduct of one Englishman—and only allowed to hunt under his charge and permission. In the summer of 1724, the alarms and distress were very great. The infant settlement of Worcester was peculiarly exposed, and sent most urgent appeals for help to Colonel Chandler at Woodstock, "having an expectation that he would be a father" to it. July 7, he received orders "to impress twenty men, to be posted in Shrewsbury and Leicester," and Captain William Chandler's company was stationed at Rutland and Leicester.

Woodstock's Indian inhabitants apparently gave her no trouble during this disturbed period. The Wabbaquassets were fast fading away and soon vanish from sight. The first seen by us is the last of whom we have definite knowledge. John Acquittamaug was still living in the vicinity of Woodstock. Indeed, it is possible that in the diversity of *spelling* common to that age, he may have been the very "John Acquatticus" who so long occupied the school-land. A visit of this aged aboriginal patriarch to Boston is thus chronicled by the News-Letter of August 29, 1723:—

"On Monday night last, at Judge Sewall's, and the night following at Judge Dudley's, was entertained one of the oldest Indians in New England—John Quittamog, living in the Nipmuck Country, near Woodstock. He is reckoned to be about one hundred and twelve years old. The English inhabitants of Woodstock remember him as a very old man for near forty years past, and that he has all along affirmed, and which he still affirms, that he was at Boston when the English first arrived; and when there was but one cellar in the place, and that near the Common, and then brought down a bushel and a half of corn upon his back.

Now, it being ninety-three years since the English settled at Boston, he cannot be supposed less than near 112 years old at this time. He says that the Massachusetts Indians sent word up to the Nipmugs that if they had any corn to spare the English wanted it, and it would be worth their while to bring some of it down, which occasioned his father and him, with some others, to come down. He is now in good health, and has his understanding and memory very entire considering his great age, and is capable of traveling on foot about ten miles in a day."

The News-Letter, of July 1-8, 1725, completes the record:—

"WOODSTOCK, *June* 30. On the 21st instant, died near this place, John Acquittamaug, aged about 114 years, but the Indians say (and he called his own age) 123 years."

In 1724, a final division of all the remaining land in the south half of Woodstock was ordered. Smith Johnson, William Lyon and Edmond Chamberlain were appointed a committee to oversee the work—John Chandler, Jun., surveyor. About seventeen hundred acres were then distributed among thirty-six proprietors. The fifty-two allotments were so arranged that those representing more than one need draw but once. "Ten acres in Honey-Pot Hole, where the hearth-stones lie," were placed under the regulations of a committee to supply the inhabitants with hearth-stones—timber growing in this lot reserved for public use. Twelve acres on Rocky Hill, adjoining the hearth-stone lot, southwest corner of Isaac Bartholomew's home-lot, were laid out to Colonel John Chandler, reserving to the inhabitants "the liberty of ingress, egress and regress to get stones from off said land as they may have occasion or chance, on the following conditions, viz., "That they fairly and friendly open and shut such gates or bars as lead into the premises by the way near Eliphalet Carpenter's house, which is the only way in which it can be come at, and that they don't presume to come on the premises for the getting and carting away stones but only in the months of November, December, January, February, March and April, without particular leave and license from said Chandler, nor suffer the stones they dig to lie dugg upon said land for more than nine months." Persons were required to draw their lots at the proper time. Very few of the original proprietors had survived to take part in this distribution. Ebenezer Morris died in 1718; Henry Bowen, March 13, 1724. John Marey, Sen., and Benjamin Griggs had also died during that year. September 11, 1725, fifty-two lots were thus distributed:—

- |   |                            |
|---|----------------------------|
| 1. Isaac Bartholomew.   | 17. John Frizzel.          |
| 2. Colonel John Chandler.                                       | 18. Nathaniel Sanger, Jun. |
| 3. Ebenezer Morris.   | 19. Smith Johnson.         |
| 4. Moses Barret.  | 20. John Holmes.           |
| 5. Edward Chamberlain.  | 21. Heirs of Thomas Lyon.  |
| 6. Heirs of John and Peter Morse<br>(lately died of small-pox). | 22. Ebenezer Eastman.      |
| 7. John Child.  | 23. Joseph Bugbee.         |
| 8. Samuel Perrin.   | 24. Colonel Chandler.      |
| 9. Morse's heirs.   | 25. Samuel Paine.          |
| 10. Eliphalet Carpenter.  | 26. Jonathan Payson.       |
| 11. Heirs of Samuel Hemingway.                                  | 27. David Holmes.          |
| 12. James Horsmor.  | 28. Heirs of Joseph Peak.  |
| 13. Henry Bowen.  | 29. Jonathan Peak.         |
| 14. James Frizzel.  | 30. John Johnson.          |
| 15. William Lyon.   | 31-34. Colonel Chandler.   |
| 16. Heirs of Benjamin Griggs.                                   | 33-35. Smith Johnson.      |
|   | 36. William Bartholomew.   |

With land divided, population increasing, Indian hostilities allayed and meeting-house completed, nothing seemed lacking to the peace and prosperity of Woodstock but pleasanter relations with the minister. Increase of salary had not diminished the difficulties. Mr. Dwight

had not the prudence needful for such a juncture and was constantly giving fresh offence by some bluntness of speech or eccentricity of conduct. His fondness for experimenting and speculating in secular matters aggrieved some of his people, and it is possible that his readiness to adopt an innovation in the form of public worship may have offended others. The question of "singing by regular tunes" was then agitating the New England churches. The few tunes brought over from England had been jangled together in inextricable discord and confusion. In 1721, the Rev. Thomas Walter, of Roxbury, published a treatise "upon the grounds and rules of music, or an introduction to the art of singing by rote," containing twenty-four tunes, harmonized into three parts. This attempt to supersede the old Puritan tunes and restrict the liberty of individual singers met with great opposition and was long successfully resisted. Mr. Dwight was one of the first to favor the new method and, in 1725, preached a sermon in Framingham, intended "To silence the outcry that has been made in many places about regular singing," which was thought worthy of publication. Mr. Dwight, in this discourse, blamed the congregations severely for their ignorance and heedlessness "in sliding from one tune to another while singing or singing the same line in different tunes," and other reprehensible practices, and gave many forcible reasons for adopting the new method. He thought that the Saviour must have used at least one tune and David several, and recommended the use of a distinct tune and the naming it with the Psalm before singing.

Another cause of dissatisfaction with Mr. Dwight was his alleged leaning towards Connecticut's Saybrook Platform, which, to this Massachusetts church, was peculiarly offensive. The ill-will and jealousy from these various causes at length rose to such a height that, August 30, 1726, a ministerial council was convened in Woodstock meeting-house. The Reverend Messrs. Estabrooks, of Canterbury; Williams, of Pomfret; Fisk, of Killingly; John Swift and John Preston, of Massachusetts, were present, and after due examination and deliberation reached the subjoined "Result:"—

"We, the subscribers, being desired by the Rev. Mr. Dwight and the brethren of the church in this place to hear their differences and essay in accommodation between them; after humble and earnest supplication to God for guidance and direction and a full hearing of their differences, we offer as follows:—

1. That it is a matter of great grief to us that we find such a general uneasiness among the people referring to Mr. Dwight's conduct among us, who hath for so many years been laboring in the work of the ministry in this flock and congregation of the Lord in this place.

2. That, in our opinion, the people or brotherhood above mentioned have reason to be dissatisfied, there being some articles in Mr. Dwight's conduct that have been exceptionable and justly grievous to the people.

3. That notwithstanding, we cannot but think, if suitable methods were



used (with a christian spirit) by the Rev. Mr. Dwight and the people, they might accommodate the differences among themselves, which we earnestly exhort them to endeavor.

4. But in case the Rev. Mr. Dwight and the people, or either of them, decline essays towards accommodation among themselves, we judge it their duty to agree upon and call a council of churches to hear and determine upon the differences among them.

Finally, we exhort the Reverend pastor, church and congregation of the Lord in this place, in the fear of God and in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Great Master of the Assembly, who will call all under shepherds and their flocks to an account, to labor conscientiously after a mutual love, care and faithfulness one to the other, that when the Great Shepherd and Bishop of souls (who standeth at the door) shall appear, their account may be with joy and not with grief."

On the following Sabbath, after dismissing the congregation, Mr. Dwight read to the church a declaration:—

"To my brethren and neighbors in Woodstock:

I have now, though with much weakness, as God has enabled me, stood it out with you in wants, wars and diversities of words these thirty-six years—pray God forgive my weakness and impatience shown—and now am so much dispirited and dis-fitted to go on with my calling among you, and so much has been laid on me tending to defeat the end of my ministry, and my family so burdened and broken, that this was the result of my thoughts, to ask at once my dismission from you in pursuit of a sedate and quiet life. But if I have before, I would not now do anything rashly like Jonah, to displease Him in whose hand my breath is and whose are all my ways, and so that which I had taken upon myself to determine, viz., staying or going off, either now or at the year's end—I will now leave with you to encourage or determine as you find your own temper and disposition in the matter. However, it seems not desirable on your side or mine that the parting should be in the midst of such a ruffle, for we must go on to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling, or we had better live no longer, and of necessity become quiet in the grave in a little time, and wo to that servant that at his Lord's coming is found beating his fellow-servant. I am sensible that I have many faults and much to be forgiven, even of uncomfortable excrescences of corrupt nature and have had too angry resentments in a day of temptation, but hope to learn better by looking more upon that unparalleled Pattern of patience and meekness—ye holy Jesus—and by daily beseeching more restraining and renewing grace. Forgive me all the wrong done you, and help me to get this testimony of my own forgiveness in Heaven (the great thing I set my mind to, I hope), that I may cordially forgive all the injury that I think has been done me. As to myself, it is pacifying that I may need affliction more than I thought, for better men have seen darker hours; besides, the disciple is not above his Lord, and I will endeavor to take other blame more patiently as well as my own, lest I have been too partial to myself, and let not my extenuation be interpreted as if I could own nothing beyond infirmity, when I designed only to guard against the mis-imputation of avariciousness, for I hope I have not so preached with a conscience to allow sin with myself and disallow it with others, for then what should I do when He rises up that executes vengeance, and I will endeavor, by the help of God, to reform what has been grievous to my hearers. But after all, by the free grace of God, through the merit of the Great Redeemer, must we get to Heaven. But if we cannot unite in other things let us in the common Saviour, and if we can't longer agree together in this world let us look for the mercy of God to eternal life and of the free gift share together and eternal life.

JOSIAH DWIGHT.

P. S. Had I my choice, it would be to finish my life and labors together in this place, where, when I had a prospect of, oft-times I have brought the meeting-house and burial-place, that are in such a strict neighborhood with us, closer still together in my thoughts, that one may be quickening and awakening about ye care and zeal belonging to ye other and prophesying about the time of rest and reward, and should come into anything I can with a good conscience to finish after these meditations well—but desire not that any would



impose too hard upon themselves to admit this, for I hope for the future, by ye help of God, having seen the end of persecution, to engage my few remaining moments in such contemplation and apprehension of the inexpressible and inconceivable eternity as to make, not only the burdens of my peregrinations, but even the whole compass of time itself, shrink to the lowest point or nothing."

The town was at once called together, "to express the minds relating to dismissing Mr. Josiah Dwight from his charge in this place to a sedate and quiet life, and whether it will be for the interest of religion and the comfort of the town to continue him in his office." On the appointed day, September 8, a large assembly gathered in the meeting-house. Much excitement prevailed. The Result of the council and Mr. Dwight's recent Declaration were "divers times read and debated." It was proposed that a day of supplication and fasting should be held, "to implore God's gracious guidance and direction in this case before the town proceeded to vote," but Mr. Dwight was unwilling to defer a projected journey, and so "the following vote came on:"—

"Forasmuch as the Rev. Mr. Dwight, by a declaration under his hand (lately exhibited) has left it to his brethren and neighbors to determine whether he should still continue in his calling, viz., ye work of ye ministry among us or desist his said labor, the question was put, 'Whether it be the opinion of the town that it will be for the glory of God, the interest of religion and the peace and comfort of the town that the labors of Mr. Dwight should be continued further among us.'"

The town replied by voting in the negative "*sixty against one* and one was neutral." A committee was then chosen in behalf of the town, to join with Colonel Chandler and the deacons who had been desired to act on behalf of the church, "to wait on Mr. Dwight and use their endeavor with him to call a council of churches, and in case he refuses to advise with the reverend divines in the neighborhood and pray them to direct to the proper steps to be taken, and use their best endeavors to bring present troubles to a happy conclusion, with what speed may be." The committee immediately repaired to Mr. Dwight to report the action of the town. All the difficulties and differences of the past had not prepared him for the disaffection and estrangement of his whole people, and with characteristic heat and vehemence he "wholly declined to come into proposals for calling a council," and sent back the following paper:—

"WOODSTOCK, *September 8, 1726.* To the church and congregation of Woodstock, his brethren and friends, this additional declaration of Josiah Dwight cometh:—

Surprised and disheartened by unexpected opposition and alienation from me, hereby I would desire my dismission from the exercise of my office and calling further among you; at least would request you would, from this time, take care to supply the pulpit one six months, by which expiration they that live to it may see other providential alterations. But according to the present view of things it seems most eligible, at least on my part, that you vote my total, immediate dismission.

JOSIAH DWIGHT.

Having considered and debated this return, the question was put, "Whither the town now totally dismisses said Josiah Dwight from his said calling as much as in them lyeth,"—and it passed in the affirmative by fifty-seven votes to one in the negative.

Thus suddenly and totally the tie between pastor and people was severed. Mr. Dwight, probably, went on his journey, the town devoted itself to procuring a minister and, after a short trial of Mr. Nathaniel Whiting, united in choice of Mr. Amos Throup—seventy-four out of seventy-five voting in his favor at their town-meeting in December.

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## IX.

### JOSHUA'S TRACT.

**T**HOUGH Massachusetts planted the first colony within Windham County limits, Connecticut was not far behind her. When the Roxbury colonists took possession of the future Woodstock, the future Windham was already surveyed, divided and distributed. This tract was a bequest from Joshua, third son of Uncas, to sixteen gentlemen belonging to Norwich and neighboring towns. In May, 1678, the General Court of Connecticut allowed and established Joshua's Will and granted the legatees liberty to possess all Joshua's rights in this land, provided they complied with the terms therein stipulated. Though the legality of Joshua's title to various other tracts conveyed by this will occasioned much subsequent controversy and litigation, the Norwich legatees secured their portion with little difficulty and no apparent opposition. Robin Cassasinamon—governor of the surviving Pequots—was commissioned by Uncas to show these gentlemen the bounds of their tract, and soon after its confirmation by the General Court he went out with Lieutenant Leffingwell and other legatees and Surveyor Bushnell into the wilderness north of Norwich. Passing through Mamosqueage—a strip north of Norwich reserved for Joshua's children,—he led them eight miles northward, by an Indian trail known as Nipmuck Path, to a wet flag-meadow a little north of the path, which he said was Appaquake—the point from which their bounds were to be run and stated. Here they lodged for the night, and the next morning crossed through the woods, ten miles, to the Willimantic River, where they lodged the second night, and thence followed Robin down the Willimantic to Mamosqueage. Soon after this preliminary exploration, Bushnell and Joseph Huntington were sent by

the Legatees "to measure down eight miles from Appaquake, by the said Nipmuck Path"—which they did, "and marked a white oak at the end of said eight miles, west side of path." The lines of the whole tract were soon afterwards run by Simon Huntington, Thomas Leffingwell, Jun., and Richard Bushnell, under the direction of Uncas. In October, 1681, Captain Robert Chapman, Captain James Fitch and Thomas Buckingham were appointed administrators of Joshua's estate, who, the following winter, conveyed according to the terms of the will, "a tract of land lying to the west of Appaquake, east from Willi-mantic River, south from Appaquake Pond, eight miles broad," to the following gentlemen therein designated as legatees:—

Captain John Mason.  
Lieutenant Samuel Mason.  
Lieutenant Daniel Mason.  
Rev. James Fitch.  
Captain James Fitch.  
John Birchard.  
Thomas Tracey.  
Thomas Adgate.

Lieutenant Thomas Leffingwell.  
John Olmstead.  
Simon Huntington.  
William Hide.  
William Backus.  
Hugh Calkins.  
Captain George Denison.  
Daniel Wetherell.

The recipients of this princely gift were all gentlemen of high character and standing. Lieutenants Samuel and Daniel Mason and Captain Denison resided in Stonington; Mr. Wetherell in New London. The remaining twelve were prominent and influential citizens of Norwich. To fulfill the conditions of the bequest and arrange "for settling a plantation upon the land given by Joshua, deceased," the Legatees met in Norwich, February 17, 1682, and signed the following agreement:—

"I. God willing, plantation work shall be carried on and a town settled within the space of four years, that is to say, we, after the above-mentioned time is expired, will bear all such public charges according to our just proportion for the carrying on plantation work.

II. Those that find they are not in a capacity to manage the several allotments for the carrying on of the true intendment and end of a plantation shall resign up their allotments to such wholesome inhabitants as the said company shall see reason to admit, upon reasonable and moderate terms.

III. We having received the land, and upon a view judge that it will afford an allotment for every thousand acres, according to the distribution made by Uncas (who was appointed by the deceased son to act), with some other allotments for public uses in the several divisions, first, second and third of the land bequeathed to us.

IV. It is agreed that the allotments be laid out in an equal manner, every one contenting himself with the place where God by his providence shall determine, by a lot drawn for that end, and the drawing of one lot shall answer for the home-lot and for the first division of upland and meadow. It is also agreed that Simon Huntington, William Backus, John Post and John Birchard shall lay out the same according to the order and manner above specified."

No further action was taken for three years, when the Legatees again met, February, 1685, and agreed to settle in three places for the convenience of lands and meadows. They also empowered the layers-out to lay out such highways as they should judge needful and granted

Richard Bushnell half an allotment for his labor and pains in surveying. Lieutenant Leffingwell, John Birchard, Thomas Waterman, John Post, Richard Bushnell, William Backus, Simon Huntington and John Calkins were appointed a committee for laying out land. By the following spring the surveys and divisions were completed and Joshua's tract ready for distribution. Beginning at Appaquake—"a flaggy meadow," now at or near the southeast corner of Eastford—the boundary line ran south eight miles, large measure, on the west side of Nipmuck Path; thence due west to the Shetucket, running a little south of the site of the future Windham Green; thence, eight miles, northwest, up the Shetucket and Willimantic, and thence ten miles east to Appaquake. A large part of the present territory of Windham, Mansfield, Chaplin, Hampton and Scotland townships was comprised in this royal gift, which was laid out in forty-eight shares, each containing a thousand acres. Each share included a home-lot in one of three places, designed for villages and portions of meadow, pasture and upland in various localities. The sites selected for villages were the Hither-place or South-east Quarter—now Old Windham Village; the Ponde-place, at Naubesatuck—now Mansfield Centre, and the valley of the Willimantic, near the site of the present Willimantic Borough. Fifteen home-lots were laid out at the Hither-place, twenty-one at the Ponde-place and twelve at Willimantic. Highways were laid out through each destined village and from the Hither to the Ponde-place. The appointed committee spent five days in making the requisite surveys and measurements—those that laid out the land receiving three shillings and those that ran the lines four shillings a day for their services.

On the first of May, 1686, the Legatees met to receive their allotments. Captain John Mason, William Hide and John Olmstead, deceased, were represented by their heirs or administrators. The remaining Legatees were probably present in person, and—"after prayer for direction and blessing,"—drew lots for their respective portions; some receiving one and some six shares, according to the royal pleasure of Uncas, who had ordered the distribution. Three shares were reserved for the ministry and other public purposes, according to agreement.

The territory of Windham was thus divided and distributed four months previous to that of Woodstock, but its settlement was delayed by the disturbed condition of public affairs. Connecticut, like the other colonies, was suffering from the encroachments of King James. Her privileges were cut off, her charter demanded, her government assumed by Sir Edmond Andross. Under his arbitrary rule, attempts at settlement were futile. He considered an "Indian deed worth no



more than the scratch of a bear's paw," and would have scouted the right of the Legatees to land bequeathed by an Indian chieftain. There is no record of attempt to secure confirmation of title from Andross. The Legatees doubtless thought it more prudent to wait in silence and make what few improvements were practicable. In 1687, it was ordered, "That the Hither-place be fenced in, but the drought was such that it could not be done," and nothing was effected during the administration of Andross but a few land sales.

The first transfer of land from the original Legatees was made before the will was proved or allowed. Captain Samuel Mason, in 1677, conveyed a thousand acre right in Joshua's tract to Captain John Brown—the husband of his sister Anna. The home-lot pertaining to this right was laid out at Willimantic and is still in possession of Captain Brown's descendants. In 1686, Captain James Fitch sold a thousand-acre right to Josiah Standish, of Duxbury, who conveyed the same to Jacob Dingley, of Hingham, two years later. May 26, 1688, Richard Bushnell sold to Jeremiah Ripley, of Hingham, "Lot No. 11, for £10. 10s.," with thousand-acre rights. Daniel Wetherell, at the same date, sold an allotment to Joshua Ripley. Calkins, during this summer, sold an allotment to Jonathan Hough, and Backus, a right to Hough, Abel and Rudd.

In the autumn of 1688, Joshua's tract received its first settler. John Cates, an English refugee, fearful of the spies of Andross, found his way into this desolate, uninhabited wilderness, and passed the winter, Crusoe-like, in a cave or cellar, fashioned by the hands of his faithful negro, Joe Ginne. Little is known of the previous history of this gentleman. Tradition represents him as a high political offender, a Commonwealth soldier and even a Regicide, but the shy Englishman kept his own secret. It is said that he landed first at Virginia, where he purchased his servant, and thence came on to New York and Norwich, but found no security till he took up his abode in this remote wilderness. Joshua's tract was then entirely uninhabited; a forest, broken only by surveyors' lines and a few rude pathways. No Indian had occupied it during Joshua's administration and it was probably only used as a hunting-ground.

The spring of 1689 brought peace and security to the Colonists. James was deposed, William and Mary enthroned, Andross driven away and colonial government resumed. The General Court of Connecticut held its first session after Andross's deposition, September 3, 1689. No man was more instrumental in restoring affairs to their former basis than Captain James Fitch,—according to Bulkley\*—

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\* Will and Doom, or the Miseries of Connecticut under a Usurped and Arbitrary Power.



traveling "from Dan to Beersheba to incite the freemen and summon a General Court." "By whom," asks this author, "was the Charter of the Government restored but by James Fitch, Nathaniel Stanley and such like private men?" The immense territory that Fitch had received from the Indians made him personally interested in the deposition of one who scouted all Indian titles, but he was also an ardent friend of popular liberty and the zealous and indefatigable advocate of any cause that enlisted his sympathies.

With the restoration of Charter government business and prosperity at once revived, and the Norwich Legatees resumed the settlement of their plantation. Cates now came out of his hiding-place and decided to settle on the tract that had given him shelter, purchasing an allotment of Daniel Mason at the Hither-place, and building, with his servant, in the summer of 1689, the first house in the new Plantation. Some other lots were fenced in, ground prepared and timber made ready for building. A division of pasture land was also laid out and distributed. The second settler reported is Jonathan Ginnings, who bought land of John Birchard and took possession in 1690. Other settlers soon followed. None of the original legatees took possession of their rights. The Rev. James Fitch's share was improved by his son John; William Backus resigned his rights to two sons; Huntington's was made over to a son and nephew; John Birchard's land was occupied by two of his sons; the other legatees sold their rights as agreed "to wholesome inhabitants."

In 1691, Joshua and Jeremiah Ripley, John Crane, Richard Hendee, Thomas and Joseph Huntington, William and Joseph Backus and John Larrabee, had broken up land, built houses and established themselves in the Hither-place—on what is now the west side of Old Windham street. Crane—a blacksmith by trade—bought land of Calkins; Hendee of Captain James Fitch; the young Backus brothers sold their accommodations in Norwich "to remove to the new, nameless town, springing up in the wilderness, ten miles northwest of Norwich." Cates was a widower; the Messrs. Backus and Hendee were unmarried; the other settlers brought with them wives and families. All but the Ripleys and Cates were previous residents of Norwich. All were men of good character and position; worthy to become the fathers and founders of a township. No details of their immigration and first establishment have been preserved. Their first year's work must have been laborious. They had their land to break up and fence, houses to build, roads to perfect, society to organize, but from their vicinity to Norwich and connection with established families there they could easily procure supplies and assistance, and suffered comparatively few

hardships and privations. The first birth in the settlement was a daughter to Jonathan Ginnings, February 10, 1691.

The first public meeting of settlers was recorded May 18, 1691. Joshua Ripley, Jonathan Crane and William and Joseph Backus were then directed "To run the town lines from Appaquake eight miles south, and thence southwest to Willimantic River." This work was accomplished by May 28, when another meeting was held, and Crane, Ripley and Ginnings were appointed "to make division of our meadows"—four shillings a day being allowed for both services. During this summer a grist-mill was set in operation by Jonathan Crane, on the site of the present Bingham's mills. A pound was also constructed on the Hither-place and preparations made for settling at the Ponde place. Religious services were held occasionally by the Rev. Mr. Fitch and his son Jabez—the settlers with their families, with wandering Mohegans and Shetuckets, assembling under a tree in the Hither-place. These settlers were mostly connected with the Norwich church and attended divine worship with it whenever practicable. The old Nipmuck Path, on the east of the tract, and a rough way made by the first surveyors, connected the settlements.

In the autumn of 1691, the residents of the New Plantation, now numbering about thirty, felt themselves sufficiently established to undertake the management of a township, and thus made known their wishes:—

"To the honored General Court, now sitting in Hartford, the request of your humble petitioners is as followeth:—

We, whose names are hereunto subscribed, with several others, are proprietors of that tract of land given by Joshua, Sachem, deceased, unto several gentlemen of Norwich. We do humbly pray your honors that you would grant us a township and call it Windham, and that our town-brand may be — — —; and that your Honors would please grant us the same privilege as to other new plantations in respect of forbearing us of our country rates awhile, and this Honorable Court would enable us to levy our town rates upon the lands of such persons as are unwilling to bear their share of charge; this being granted will greatly oblige us to pray. We remain yours, in all duty bound:—

Joshua Ripley.

John Cates.

Jeremiah Ripley.

Jonathan Crane.

Joseph Huntington.

William Backus.

Jonathan Ginnings.

Thomas Huntington.

Richard Hendee.

John Backus.

John Larrabee.

October 6, 1691."

The Court considered the premises, and "finding none of the principal proprietors of said land in the petition," did not see cause to grant the request at this time, but desired the Norwich deputies to inform the petitioners and proprietors that in the following May "they would give all due encouragement for planting the aforesaid place and expected their attendance upon the Court for an issue." This

injunction being observed and no opposition manifested, May 12, 1692, the Court thus enacted:—

“Upon the petition of the inhabitants of the town of Norwich and others, legatees and proprietors of the new plantation that is settling above the town of Norwich, this Court grants to the petitioners liberty of a township, with all liberties and privileges usually granted for the encouragement of the settling new plantations, and exemption from paying any country rates for the space of four years, and order the name of the town to be called Windham, and the town brand to be, &c.; and the inhabitants are obliged to improve their utmost endeavor to procure and maintain an able and faithful ministry in the place, and bear all other town charges as the law directs.”

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## X.

### WINDHAM.

HAVING secured town privileges, the inhabitants of Windham held their first public town meeting, June 12, 1692. John Fitch, recently removed to the Hither-place, and Jonathan Hough, Samuel Hide and John Royce, who had established a settlement in the distant Ponde-place, increased their number to fifteen. Joshua Ripley was chosen town-clerk; Jeremiah Ripley, Jonathan Crane and Jonathan Hough, townsmen; Thomas Huntington and John Royce, surveyors; Joseph Huntington, Jonathan Hough, Samuel Hide and John Fitch, to lay out highways. It was voted, “To petition the General Court for liberty to portion town charges, and that Joshua Ripley should manage it.” Jonathan Crane and Thomas Huntington were then desired “to ask advice from Mr. Fitch about a minister.” This was probably the Rev. James Fitch, then perhaps in Windham, as the settlers the same day voted, “To apply to Mr. Samuel Whiting for the purpose of carrying on the work of the ministry, and that Thomas Huntington should go to Milford and further treat with Mr. Whiting, in order to get him here.” This young man was a son of Rev. John Whiting, of Hartford, and, after having studied with Mr. Fitch and Dr. McSparran, of South Kingston, was probably then completing his theological course with the Rev. Samuel Andrews. The negotiation was at first unsuccessful, but the appointed committee were continued in office by the town, and in September, Thomas Huntington was further directed, “To go again to agree with Mr. Whiting to come here and carry on the ministry.”

While awaiting his decision, Mr. Jabez Fitch continued to officiate. The house of Mr. John Fitch—the latest and probably the best built house in the settlement—was selected “to be the meeting house till

other provision be made," and it was ordered "to be fortified and a lean-to built, every man doing his share of the fortification."

During this summer, several new inhabitants removed to the Ponde-place, and considerable progress was made in that settlement. Messrs. Ginnings and Crane were directed to go with Birchard, Post or Bushnell—Norwich surveyors—"to set to rights the lots at the Ponds." As the crossing the Nachaug River made communication difficult and uncertain, the town agreed, August, 1692, "That thirty-five acres of upland and five of meadow be sequestered upon the account of a ferry—land to be laid out between y<sup>e</sup> two riding-places." Twenty-five acres on the south side of the river, above the upper riding-place, were ordered "to be measured and laid out to John Larrabee, upon condition that he keep the ferry seven years, with a good and sufficient canoe upon his own cost, and in case the towns shall see cause to make a boat, this, likewise, to be kept and maintained by him for the time aforesaid, his charge being two-pence a head for single persons; hors and man carried over in the boat—four-pence." Larrabee was to build upon the land; Crane and Ginnings to lay it out. In case Larrabee were taken away by death, and his wife not able to manage the ferry, the town agree to pay back to her what he has laid out on the land and if the said Larrabee were to die within six years, the twenty five acres south side of the river should be her heirs.

At the December town-meeting, several new inhabitants appeared. Selectmen, surveyors, fence viewers and haywards were chosen for each settlement. Jeremiah Ripley was appointed constable for the whole town. It was voted, "That the grist-mill be a town-charge throughout the town." Ginnings, Hendee, Jeremiah Ripley and James Birchard were granted the privilege of the stream at Beaver Brook for building a saw-mill, and half a mile of land adjoining for timber and pasture—they giving the town as good usage as is customary in other towns—"said mill to go within a year and the land to be returned to town when the mill is worn out." All admitted inhabitants were "granted the privilege of commons for (earbeig) and for timber and stone."

After repeated applications, Mr. Whiting was induced to come to Windham, and preached his first sermon from the first verse of the first chapter of Genesis, January 1, 1693—the first day of the week, month and year. His preaching and conversation proving acceptable to the people, a meeting was called, February 1, when—"in order to compleat an agreement with Mr. Whiting to carry on the work of the ministry," Samnel Robarts and Jonathan Crane were chosen to discourse with him, and agreed to give the first half-year twenty pounds in provision pay and four pounds silver. Crane, Robarts and Joseph Huntington were



appointed "collectors, to levy and gather rate, and if any need be—sue or distrain for it." At the same meeting, a committee was empowered to levy and raise a mill-rate, as a public charge, to be levied upon all the lands equally.

So many new settlers arrived during the winter that, at its town-meeting, May 30, 1693, Windham enrolled the subjoined list of admitted and approved inhabitants :—

Joshua Ripley.	John Cates.
Jonathan Crane.	Richard Hendee.
Jonathan Ginnings or Jennings.	James Birchard.
Joseph Huntington.	Jonathan Hough.
Thomas Huntington.	Samuel Hide.
William Backus.	John Royce.
John Backus.	Samuel Birchard.
John Larrabee.	Robert Wade.
Thomas Bingham.	Peter Crane.
John Rudd.	Sam. Linkon.
Jeremiah Ripley.	John Arnold.

Of these twenty-two inhabitants, the last named eight had settled at the Ponde place, all the others were residents of the Hither-place or southeast quarter—save John Larrabee, who kept the ferry between the settlements. Thomas Bingham, who had removed from Norwich with a large family of sons and daughters, was an important acquisition to Windham. He purchased, March, 1693, Captain John Mason's first lot, at the southeast quarter, for £14 in provision pay; applied to pay town charges at the corn-mill. Mr. Bingham was then about fifty years of age, being, after Cates, the oldest man in the township, and became one of its most useful and valued citizens. His oldest daughter, Mary, had married John Backus the summer preceding. John Arnold had been schoolmaster in Norwich and was one of the most intelligent and influential of the Ponde-town settlers. Samuel and James Birchard were the sons of John Birchard, a Norwich Legatee. The other new comers were also residents of Norwich.

Improvements and accommodations kept pace with the increase of population. Great care was taken to provide for the Ponde-town people. Sign-posts were ordered against William Backus's house at the Hither-place, and Samuel Hide's at the Ponde-place. The brander's house and the pound were made the public places for branding horses. Messrs. Hough, Hide and Fitch were appointed to view a convenient place for a burying-ground at the Pondes, and Crane and Ginnings for the other settlement. As the number of new buildings in progress made a lively demand for boards, Jonathan Ginnings and the Ripleys had liberty to set up a saw-mill and the privilege of a dam at No-man's-acre Brook. Captain James Fitch, John Fitch and Joshua Ripley were chosen to meet with Hartford gentlemen to settle the lines at Willimantic. It was agreed at this meeting that the Willimantic



River should be the bounds between the grants of Norwich and Hartford gentlemen—land east of that river accruing to Windham.

In September, the town voted "To belong to Hartford County," though its connection with Norwich would seem to have led it to New London. In December, the following town orders were adopted:—

I. That all our fences shall be a sufficient pine-rail fence, or what is equivalent thereto, against cattle and swine—unruly cattle, unruly swine and swine under half a year old only excepted.

II. It has been found by experience, to the damage of some persons, that by foriners bringing of swine to this town, and the swine going away have led away our swine—for the prevention of which, if any person shall give liberty to any foriner to bring swine here, he shall pay a fine of twenty shillings—half to informer and half to town—and whatsoever swine found in town not belonging to town shall be poundable if it appears they are brought in.

III. For the preservation of our timber, no man shall transport a load or part of a load of cedar out of town, under penalty of fifteen shillings, for the town's use.

IV. That the constable for the year ensuing shall warn the town-meeting by virtue of a warrant given under the townsmen's hands, and all those that neglect attending being so warned, shall forfeit to the town's use one shilling-six-pence, country pay, and the constable to have one half of the said fines, to be gathered by distress or estate-seizure in law by said constable, except said delinquents, within a month, bring a certificate under townsmen's hands to constable; a sufficient warning for the town-meeting being a writing set on the sign-post, signed by the selectmen, five days before the meeting, and the contents of the meeting mentioned therein, and the like to be set up at the mill.

These orders voted at town-meeting, December 22, 1693."

A committee had been previously appointed to discourse with Mr. Whiting, offer him an allotment through the several divisions, with fifty pounds salary and to build for him a house, habitable, two stories high and eighteen feet square,—“said house in capacity like Joseph Dingley's—provided he would stay four years.” Mr. Whiting accepting these terms, the town voted, February 14, 1694, “That the meetings on Sabbath days shall be three days here (at the Hither-place) and two days at north end during the time that Mr. Whiting is engaged, provided he be willing to undergo the travel.” At the same meeting, Joshua Ripley and Jonathan Crane were empowered by the town to run the town lines with Major Fitch, Thomas Leffingwell and John Butcher, employed by proprietors—“we being at half the charge.”

In the spring, a highway was ordered through Peter Crane's division, extending from the Ponde-place to the Willimantic River, near the Falls. The meadows in this vicinity furnished the Windham settlers with a great part of their hay, and to facilitate its conveyance this highway was ordered “four rods wide from the hill to the river, seven rods wide down to the meadow, and four rods wide between meadow and fence.” Twelve acres below the Falls abutting west and north on the river, were allowed to Mr. Crane as sufficient satisfaction for this highway. The home-lots laid out at Willimantic were not as yet taken up by the proprietors, and in April,

1694, they received permission from the town to exchange them for allotments "at or about the Crotch of the river"—that remarkable curve in the Nachaug near its junction with the Willimantic, also known as the Horse-shoe. Seven lots were now laid out in this vicinity. Joshua Ripley, Samuel Hide, Joseph Huntington, Peter Crane and Thomas Bingham were chosen to choose two lots at the Crotch of the River, one for the minister and one for the ministry. The remaining home-lots were sold to settlers, who soon took possession. "Goodman William More," of Norwich, purchased a lot laid out to William Backus; Benjamin Millard, of Bear Hill, Norwich, bought his land of Thomas Leffingwell—a thousand-acre allotment, at the Horse-shoe, a part of which is still held by his descendants. Benjamin Howard and Joseph Cary, of Norwich, and John Broughton, of Northampton, soon settled in this vicinity. This new settlement was also called "The Centre," from its position between the older ones, and seemed destined for a time to become the most important. The seventh lot was chosen for the minister and the sixth for the ministry, and great efforts were made to have the meeting-house built upon it.

July 20, 1694, the town agreed to give Mr. Whiting "seventh lot and divisions, break up six acres and fence in ten; to give him a hundred pounds provision pay, towards building a house, and plant him one hundred apple trees—when Mr. Whiting is ordained, the whole to be his, or if he die before having a family, the accommodations go to his heirs." November 24, "voted and agreed, to add to Mr. Whiting's salary after what is already engaged at a meeting in July last, that is to say, after March come twelve months next ensuing the date hereof—that we will, God enabling us, give as followeth: £60 per year for three years; then £70 for three years; then £80 for three years." In the following February, these terms were re-stated and confirmed, and Mr. Whiting desired and urged "to continue with us," at which time he engaged "to stay two years, God enabling him, to carry on the work of the ministry."

In answer to her petition, Windham was, in May, 1694, annexed to Hartford County. The large number of non-resident proprietors making it difficult to collect the rates needful for building Mr. Whiting's house and other expenses, two men were appointed to petition the General Court for order to levy town charges, which body being informed "that sundry of that town who have taken up land there, and yet are not settled there, do neglect paying their said rates, and the inhabitants cannot come at their personal estate to levy the same,"—

therefore judged, that in all such cases the Windham authorities might "siez their lands for their rates, and bring the same to a tryall."

Early in 1695, attempt was made to decide upon a locality for a meeting-house. Ginnings, Huntington, Royce and Wade were directed to measure and find a centre, beginning at the northern and southern extremities of the town, "measure where the path goes and so to find the senter for meeting-house." As preliminary to this, a bridge was ordered. A committee was appointed in February, "To choose a place on the Nachaug River for a sufficient bridge suitable for man and beast to pass with a load, the selectmen to agree with men to make it, lay a rate for the same and find help to raise the bridge." This bridge was built by Robert Fenton—a new and enterprising inhabitant of Pondetown,—for the sum of fourteen pounds. In May, a military company was formed in Windham, with John Fitch for lieutenant, Jonathan Crane, ensign, and Samuel Hide, sergeant; and training-days were thenceforward observed with appropriate hilarity. During this summer, a committee was chosen "To lay out all highways that are needful on or about the hill that lies west of the Pond, east from the Crotch, and then those proprietors that desire their pasture lots removed to the east side of the hill shall have liberty to do so, and the owners of the Pond allowed the liberty and privilege for ditching and draining in the most convenient place." It was also agreed "to choose a moderator at beginning of town meetings; he to open with prayer," and on the fourth of November every man was ordered "To pay Mr. Whiting one bushel of come before December 1."

In 1696, the energies of the town were almost wholly restricted to building a house for the minister, whose approaching marriage made expedition needful. The selectmen were empowered to agree with masons to build the chimneys; the remainder of the work was accomplished by the towns-people, detailed into squads, each directed by a leading citizen. Ensign Crane led to the charge Joshua Ripley, Thomas Bingham, John Rudd, John Larrabee, John Cates, the two Huntingtons, Lieutenant Conant, Joshua Waldo and William Moulton. They were succeeded by Jonathan Ginnings, with Jeremiah Ripley, Lieutenant Fitch, John Backus, William More, Benjamin Howard, Joseph Dingley, Benjamin Millard, — Edgerton, Joseph Bradford and John Broughton. Peter Cross came next, with Sergeant Hide, John Allen, Samuel Linkon, John Royce, Samuel and James Birchard. The fourth squad, under William Hall, included Joseph Hall, Nathaniel Barrett,

Benjamin Armstrong, Robert Smith and William Backus. With such a body of workmen, it may be hoped the house was in readiness to receive Mr. Whiting and his bride—Elizabeth, daughter of Rev. William Adams, of Dedham, to whom he was married, September 14,—though a rate of £16 was levied in the following January, “to pay a workman to finish the minister’s house.”

The population of Windham was constantly increasing. William and Joseph Hall, Joshua and John Allen, Nathaniel Bassett, Benjamin Armstrong, Samuel Gifford and Robert Smith were now settled at the Ponde—the Halls removing there from Plymouth, Bassett from Yarmouth, the others probably from Norwich. Joseph Dingley now occupied the allotment purchased by Captain Standish. William Backus exchanged his house and accommodations at the Hither-place for Ensign Crane’s grist-mill. Crane sold the house and lot to Exercise Conant, in 1695, who, for £70 in silver, July 3, 1696, conveyed it to John Abbe, of Wenham. Samuel Abbe, probably brother to John, purchased half an allotment and half a house at the Centre, of Benjamin Howard, in 1697. John Waldo, of Boston, a reported descendant of Peter Waldo, of Lyons, purchased an allotment laid out to Rev. James Fitch, and was admitted an inhabitant of Windham in 1698. William Hide, William Moulton, Philip Paine, John Ashby, Josiah Kingsley, Samuel Storrs, Sen. and Jun., Robert and Joseph Hebard, Isaac Magoon, John Howard and Thomas Denham, were also admitted inhabitants in or before 1698; Shubael Dimmock, in 1699; Abraham Mitchell, in 1700.

With many gains, they had some losses—James Birchard sold his right in Windham to Philip Paine, in 1696, and removed to the West Farms of Norwich; Samuel Abbe died a few months after his arrival in Windham, his son, Samuel, succeeding to his estate at the Centre, his widow marrying Abraham Mitchell. John Cates, the first Windham settler, died in the summer of 1697. Though less active in town affairs than younger and more vigorous citizens, Mr. Cates was greatly esteemed for prudence and sound judgment, and proved his interest in his adopted township by leaving legacies for its benefit. A service of plate was left for the communion service of the church, two hundred acres of land in trust for the poor, and two hundred acres to be applied to schools. His faithful Joe, together with a bed, a chest and wearing apparel were given to Mr. Whiting. His housekeeper, Mary—sister of Benjamin Howard—was his executrix. His land—one Windham allotment—was valued at £40; his servant at £30. It is said that poor Joe manifested his grief at his master’s death by the most frantic outbursts, and did not long survive him. A tomb-stone—probably the



first in Windham burying-ground—thus commemorates its first settler and benefactor :—

In  
Memory of  
Mr. John Cates.  
He was a gentleman, born  
in England,  
And the first settler in the  
Town of Windham.  
By his last  
Will and Testament  
He gave a  
Generous legacy  
To y<sup>e</sup> first  
Church of Christ in  
Windham  
In plate, and a generous  
Legacy in land  
For y<sup>e</sup> support of y<sup>e</sup> poor;  
And another  
Legacy for y<sup>e</sup> support  
Of y<sup>e</sup> school  
In said town for ever.  
He died  
In Windham,  
July y<sup>e</sup> 16th, A. D.  
1697.

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## XI.

### PONDE-TOWN CONTROVERSY. CHURCH ORGANIZATION.

**W**HILE Woodstock was highly favored at the outset, Windham enjoyed even superior advantages. Its land was cheap and accessible; its Indians few and friendly; its wolves scarce and easily subdued; its situation pleasant and healthful; its valleys free from encumbering forests and easily brought under cultivation; its most pressing public wants supplied by the forethought and generosity of the first proprietors. Its inland position secured it from alarm and invasion, and the long Indian war, so pernicious to Woodstock, had no effect upon the growth and prosperity of the younger settlement, and left no trace upon its records. Its vicinity to Norwich gave it many valuable privileges, and greatly promoted its settlement and progress. At Norwich, the settlers found both market and supplies, and what was lacking there could be found at New London, where Mr. Pygan, the merchant, had accounts with inhabitants both of "Norwich and Windam."



These unusual advantages attracted to Windham a very superior class of citizens—men of character, position and public spirit, desirous to found a permanent home for their descendants. Many of its early settlers were men of means and intelligence. Joshua Ripley and John Fitch were widely known and respected as men of sterling sense and sound judgment, and were often called to public services in different parts of the Colony. Mr. Ripley was one of the first Justices of the Peace in Connecticut, appointed in May, 1698, when that office was instituted. He was also the first representative sent by Windham to the General Assembly, appearing in that body in May, 1699.

Thomas Bingham, Jonathan Crane, Joseph Cary, John and Samuel Abbe, Thomas Huntington and his brother, were among Windham's active and influential citizens. Mr. Whiting was a man of much piety, wisdom, culture and public spirit, greatly beloved and revered by all his people. Nor were the wives of these leading Windham citizens at all inferior to their husbands. So far as can be ascertained, they were women of marked character and energy. Hannah Bradford, the wife of Joshua Ripley—a descendant of Plymouth's famous governor—was a noble and useful woman, remarkable not only for intelligence and accomplishments but for skill in the art of healing. She was the first, and long the only, physician in the settlement, and it is said that the first male physician, Dr. Richard Huntington, received much of his medical knowledge from her. Mrs. Whiting, sister of the Rev. Eliphalet Adams, of New London, was as noted for piety and goodness as her excellent husband. Though "woman's rights" had not then been discussed, these Windham women assumed the privilege of doing any work for which they were fitted. Mary Howard could not only keep house for John Cates but settle his estate, and Lucy Reynolds, wife of Benjamin Millard, could kill a bear, lift a barrel of meat, or—if tauntingly challenged—throw the strongest man in Windham.

Yet, with all Windham's advantages, like Woodstock, she "was not in all respects in capacity," and in some important points was greatly deficient. Traveling facilities had as yet received little attention. In her first decade, she had apparently built but one bridge; laid out but one highway. Her only other stated roads were those marked out by her first surveyors. The road from the Crotch or Centre to Windham Green, it is said, was never regularly laid out, but gradually developed out of a footpath. The population was mainly concentrated in the three villages and their vicinity. Rude bridle-paths and foot-trails led thence to the mills, meadows, cedar-swamp and outlying parts of the town.

Education was as yet entirely neglected by the town authorities. Children were taught at home and, possibly, in private schools, but

Windham had made no provision for public instruction, following in this the bad example of the mother township—Norwich, in 1700, being presented before the grand jury of the county “for want of a school to instruct children.”

Church organization and meeting-house were also still lacking. This surprising deficiency arose, however, not from neglect or indifference, but from excessive carefulness and anxiety to act for the best interests of the town. The location of the meeting-house was first to be settled. Two settlements, “four miles apart and with a bad river between,” were to be accommodated. The public sentiment of the day favored centralization. One church organization and one place of worship were deemed sufficient for every township. The first step of the town was to measure for its “senter.” The precise result of this measurement is not on record, but the spot deemed “most accommodable” for the entire population was at the Crotch or Horse-shoe, where a settlement was just commencing. Its prospective selection for the meeting-house drew settlers to this point, and gave it much importance. Here the minister’s house was built in 1696, and here, the winter following, divine service was held statedly at the house of Goodman More. Previous to this, the services had alternated between the two older settlements, the inhabitants meeting on Sabbath days sometimes “two days in the south of the town and one at the Ponde,” or “half the time at the north and half at the south end,”—but now the town voted, “To comply with Mr. Whiting for the meeting on Sabbath in one place as he desired,” and the place selected was at the Crotch or Centre—now known as “Brick-top.”

The residents of the southeast quarter were not, however, satisfied with this arrangement, and the prospect of the church settlement in that locality. Their own village was far most populous and prosperous. With ample room and means to build a house for their own accommodation, they demurred from binding themselves to build and maintain one at an inconvenient distance. Apart from selfish considerations, the leading citizens of Windham Green could not but foresee that a separation ere many years would be inevitable, and deemed it the wisest course to provide for future development. The first intimation of their views upon the question is shown in the following resolution, adopted at town meeting, January 14, 1697:—

“Whereas, the town of Windham, by its settlement and laying out of the allotments is in two places, about four miles distant one from another, and a bad river between these two places, it is therefore much to be desired that it might be that each place may be a distinct place and society, if on further experience of our capacity and ability and the good providence of God succeeding therein; we, both parts of y<sup>e</sup> town, suppose it to be our duty, at least, now to make some provision in order thereunto. It is, therefore, by these presents voted and agreed by both parts as follows:—

I. We, at the southeast quarter, do by these presents give our full and free

consent that our neighbors at y<sup>e</sup> Ponde-place, when they find themselves in capacity to call and settle a minister among themselves in an orderly way, with y<sup>e</sup> approbation of y<sup>e</sup> General Court—that then we, in the southeast quarter, do free them from all dues and rates to our minister.

II. We consent that our Ponde-place neighbors shall have the benefit of y<sup>e</sup> remaining part of y<sup>e</sup> rate for y<sup>e</sup> minister's house, unpaid, to be improved among themselves.

III. In suitable time will join with our neighbors, in a loving way, to state and agree with respect to the dividend.

IV. The Ponde-place people shall pay for the minister till they have one of their own.

V. The present place of meeting shall be at Goodman More's till the southeast quarter build a meeting-house of their own, or till we are in an orderly way two distinct societies—the place to set the meeting-house to be stated by the southeast quarter.

VI. Before division lines are run, there shall be a laying out of those divisions of land and meadow yet unlaied belonging to allotments at y<sup>e</sup> Crotch and the line be run in April or May.

January 14, 1697, these proposals voted in Windham."

In accordance with this agreement, the southeast inhabitants proceeded to make arrangements for the erection of their meeting-house, and in February voted that the place to set in should be "the next convenient place to y<sup>e</sup> north of John Backus, his house." In April, Jeremiah Ripley and Thomas Huntington were appointed, "to run the dividend line between us and neighbors at north end," on condition "that if any person do enfringe our right or claim and take away any of our land, that our neighbors north shall be engaged under hand and seal to join with us to make purchase of the land that is taken away from us, that we may have our proportion of land with our neighbors."

Still the work did not go on, the north-end settlers were much averse to a separation from their stronger neighbor, nor was it, probably, favored by non-resident proprietors or the General Court. After renewed discussion and deliberation, December 17, 1697, Shubael Dimmick—a new resident of Ponde-town,—William Hall, Joshua Ripley, Lieutenant Fitch and Sergeant Sam. Hide, were chosen "a committee to add to selectmen to settle the dividend line, and to put things into a capacity for the unighting of each end of y<sup>e</sup> town together in the most loving way and suitable manner that they can—and further, if these men above named cannot agree,—then the town have made choice of the worshipful Mr. William Pitkin and Deacon Olmstead, and John Tracy, of Norwich, to issue the business and controversy in the town in respect to dividing or not dividing the town, and give them full power to decide the matter in controversy, and in case they do not decide to divide, they are to state the meeting-house plot, and the town agrees to stand to their judgment for a final issue of the matters in controversy, and promises to pay the men for their travel and for their entertainment to the land-lord."

This committee, after much discourse, "could not but judge it a thing improper and as yet not attainable for us to divide the town," and, therefore, after having debated and discoursed things to the best of their ability, judged, "That the meeting-house must stand in the Center, between y<sup>e</sup> two ends of the town as formerly agreed upon, and the money that has been paid by the people of the south end towards finishing the minister's house be returned back—half in money; half to go towards building meeting-house." To this decision, the south-end party reluctantly submitted. Ten from the north end and eight from the south voted to accept it; three bold south-enders had the hardihood to vote its rejection; a large number declined to express their opinion. The Ponde-town people had won the day, and the controversy was settled.

In January, 1698, a rate of £40 was allowed for the meeting-house. Joseph Hall, John Waldo and John Backus were appointed a committee to gather the rate and agree with workmen "to build a meeting-house thirty-five feet long, twenty-four feet wide, and twelve feet between joists, with a gable on each side the roof up to top of the house." Still the work was not begun nor Mr. Whiting called to ordination as advised by the committee, but was still "desired to stay with us," and had eighty cords of wood allowed him. A new pound was ordered at the southeast quarter, at the southeast corner of Richard Hendee's house-lot. The town-officers chosen this year, were: Joshua Ripley, town-clerk; Joseph Dingley and Joseph Hall, collectors for minister; Thomas Huntington and Jonathan Ginnings, fence-viewers for south end of town; William More, surveyor of highways for south end; Samuel Lincoln, surveyor for north end; William Backus, pound-keeper and hayward for the great field at the south end; Benjamin Millard, hayward for fields at Crotch of River; Lientenant Fitch and Samuel Birchard, to lay out land. It was voted, "That Lieutenant Fitch shall go no more alone to lay out land." In response to a petition preferred to the General Court by Joshua Ripley, to alter the way of raising rates, the town was allowed—October 1698—to value all their allotments at £35 each, and levy rates for minister and other town charges both on land and personal estate.

No farther action was taken this year with reference to the meeting house, but the south end party were more and more dissatisfied with the decision, and reluctant to build upon the spot adjudged by the committee. Early in 1699, the question was re-opened by a proposition in town-meeting, February 6, "To have a committee come and judge whither it is best for us to divide or not, and make report to y<sup>e</sup> General Court in May—which, if it be not to divide the town,—



then to state the place where y<sup>e</sup> meeting-house shall stand for y<sup>e</sup> whole town, and having obtained y<sup>e</sup> Court's sanction to y<sup>e</sup> judgment in the case, this shall put a final issue to the controversy." This proposal called out a most earnest and determined opposition. Nineteen men from the north part of the town, led by William Hall, protested most solemnly by word and vote against this attempt "to bring us from or make void that agreement made December 20, 1697,"—but all their efforts were fruitless. Three of their number afterward "protested against their protestation;" the vote was carried by a fair majority, and the Ponde-town people forced to submit to "manifest destiny," and the will of the strongest. The committee, if appointed, reported in favor of division, and both parties were agreed upon the following articles "respecting their equal privileges of the whole township:"

"WINDHAM, *March 16, 1699.* The remoteness of the settlement being such that if the said privileges be not equally divided will become a burthen, and snare to the inhabitants, therefore, after so long debate and trouble of each end, we agree to divide the privileges.

I. We agree, with the consent of our reverend minister, to divide the Lord's days, that is, from this date to the 25th of December, to have the meeting half the time at the north and half at the south end for seven years, then each place to endeavor to keep a minister by themselves,—but if the north end can get a minister sooner, we engage to repay them the money they paid towards the minister's house.

II. It is agreed that each end shall build a meeting-house upon their own cost and charges, big enough to accommodate the whole congregation, and to set them where the inhabitants of each place shall see most convenient for the present and future advantage of each place. Further, the neighborhood of each place do covenant and agree that they will find as convenient a house as possibly they can for the whole society to meet in as it falls to be their turns until the meeting-houses be up and fit for such work.

III. It is fully and firmly agreed upon, that there shall not be one privilege or advantage that respects the whole town but shall be divided between the two ends aforesaid. (1.) To instance, that all military affairs, as training days and town-meetings, shall be at either end of the town according as the religious exercises are divided."

This important question being thus harmoniously settled, Windham was enabled, at length, to initiate measures for church organization, and, in May, presented the subjoined petition to the General Assembly:—

"May it please your honors to consider that, whereas, we, the inhabitants of the town of Windham, having been long in an unsettled way and destitute of the ordinances of Christ, but God having been pleased so far now to favor his people here as to give us hopes of a good settlement in these affairs of greatest concernment, and also God having so disposed of the hearts of his people in that they are desiring and longing after the enjoyment of God in all his holy ordinances; we, therefore, whose names are under-written, in behalf of said town of Windham, do humbly request that this honored Court would be pleased so far to favor us and the interests of Christ among us as to grant us liberty to embody into church estate and to ordain the Rev. Samuel Whiting, with the advice and help of the neighboring churches, that so we may enjoy God in all his holy ordinances that are according to his own institutions, which is the greatest happiness belonging to a people on this side Heaven. We, therefore, request that your Honors would look friendly upon us and



help us with your consent, counsel and prayers, that we (may abide) under the shadow of your wings. In so doing, you shall firmly oblige us to be wishing and seeking your welfare and prosperity according to the littleness of the ability of your honors' humble servants,

JOSHUA RIPLEY.

· THOMAS BINGHAM.

THOMAS HUNTINGTON."

1699.

The Governor, Council and Representatives at once declared their approval of the desire of the people of Windham, and their readiness "to give them all good countenance and encouragement in that work, provided they proceed therein with the advice of the neighbor churches." The agreement between the inhabitants of the north and south ends of the town was also ratified and confirmed by them, and all were enjoined "to conforme thereunto, and to promote the fulfilling thereof in all its parts, both with their persons and estates."

Notwithstanding this gracious permission and encouragement, and the amicable settlement of the great controversy, more than a year passed before church organization was effected. Sabbath services alternated between the north and south villages. The sacrament was administered occasionally by the Norwich minister, but, on October 22, 1699, the Rev. James Noyes, of Stonington, officiated, baptizing—

"David, y<sup>e</sup> son of Jonathan Ginnings,  
John, y<sup>e</sup> son of John Backus,  
Sarah, y<sup>e</sup> daughter of John Abby,  
Abigail, y<sup>e</sup> daughter of Joseph Hebbard."

January 30, 1700, the front part of William Backus's home-lot, at the southeast quarter, was purchased by Mr. Whiting and Ensign Crane, and made over by them to the town for a "meeting-house plat or common." This was the neucleus of Windham Green, on which the first Windham meeting-house was soon after erected, but as this work was managed by a committee few details are preserved. The church was organized in what was known as the Dingley House, a mile north of the Green. Mr. Whiting was ordained December 4, 1700, nearly eight years after his assumption of pastoral duties. No record of the services has been found. The church was formed six days afterward—December 10. Its original members were:—

Samuel Whiting.  
Thomas Bingham.  
Joseph Carey.  
Joshua Ripley.  
Thomas Huntington.  
John Backus.

Joseph Huntington.  
Jeremiah Ripley.  
Jonathan Crane.  
Joseph Hebbard.  
Samuel Abbe.  
John Abbe.

Robert Hebbard.  
Mary Hebbard.  
Hannah Abbe.  
Rebecca Huntington.

The names of two males and ten females are now illegible. John Abbe and Robert Hebbard, with their wives, were dismissed from the church in Wenham, Massachusetts, "to join with others in gathering and erecting a church at Windham." The others had probably been

connected with the church at Norwich. The form of the original covenant has not been preserved. Thomas Bingham, Joseph Carey and Nathaniel Wales were chosen as deacons of the church. The thousand-acre right reserved by the Legatees for the minister was soon afterwards made over to Mr. Whiting, "for his faithful labors eight years in the work of the ministry."

## XII.

### ADDITION OF TERRITORY. SCOTLAND SETTLEMENT. TOWN DIVISION.

THE territory of Windham, broad and ample at first, had now received some valuable additions. The tract of land "between Windham and Norwich bounds, called the Mamosqueage lands"—reserved by Joshua for the benefit of his children,—was contested by Owaneco, and only after a long and troublesome controversy secured by Joshua's son, Abimileck, who sold it to John Clark and Thomas Buckingham. This tract, embracing about ten thousand acres, lying west of Nipmuck Path, was purchased, in 1698, by Crane and Huntington, in behalf of the proprietors of Windham, and made over, in 1700, to the Rev. Samuel Whiting and Jonathan Crane, who assumed the whole charge of it, laying it out in shares and selling it to settlers. Their right was challenged by Lieutenant Daniel Mason, who had received a deed of the land from Owaneco, and, in spite of the decision adjudging it to Abimileck—"at the public day of training in Windham, May 13, 1701, when many people were present," Mason openly proclaimed his right to the lands at Mamosqueage, and warned all people from cumbering the same. In the following September, the General Court ratified and confirmed their purchase to Messrs. Whiting and Crane, and granted them a patent, which effectually precluded all further demonstrations from Lieutenant Mason.

The meadows west of the Willimantic River were also annexed to Windham. This broad stretch of interval land was not included either in the grant to Windham or Lebanon—but lay for some years vacant and unappropriated. Both Windham and Lebanon residents purchased land in this section, and, as settlers took possession, the question arose as to which town they belonged, and, upon application to the General Court, a committee was sent, who reported that it would be for the advantage of the inhabitants to belong to Windham. It is said that

both towns were satisfied with the decision. Lebanon congratulated itself upon release from burdensome bridge-making and mending; Windham rejoiced in the prospect of abundance of shad and salmon. A great part of her hay was also procured from these extensive meadows. The boundary line between the towns was satisfactorily and permanently settled by a committee from each town, September 23, 1701,—“fully empowered to agree and get the General Court’s sanction to this, our agreement.”

In March, 1700, a division of hundred-acre lots was ordered, “each man to choose according to the figure he draws, and have liberty to take up as many acres in number as the figure, provided always that none of this land shall be taken up within a mile of y<sup>e</sup> meeting-house, or on the east side of Merrick’s Brook, or northwest of Nachaug River.” Every man had liberty to take land adjoining his own land or meadow—“Goodman Hebard to have the first choice of the hundred acres on condition he quits the claim he made of land between the lines and now takes up satisfied for that claim.” Those who wilfully neglected to make their choice were to lose the same after May 1st. It was also agreed that “all lands not put into the rate-list should be valued at six shillings, eight-pence an acre.”

This addition and division of land facilitated settlement in the outlying parts of the town. The settlement of the southeast section, known as Scotland, began about 1700—its first settler, Isaac Magoon, giving it the name of his native country. Mr. Magoon was admitted an inhabitant of Windham in 1698, and chose to establish himself east of Merrick’s Brook, in a remote and uninhabited part of the town. An early Norwich land-owner is believed to have given his name to this brook. In 1700, Mr. Magoon purchased of Mr. Whiting several hundred acres in the southern extremity of Clark and Buckingham’s tract. The first rude hut built by him in this locality is said to have been destroyed by fire, and a second built for him by the aid of his Windham neighbors. Sixty acres, on both sides Merrick’s Brook, through which passed “the road to the Quinebaug Plantation”—afterwards Plainfield—was also bought by him of Joshua Ripley, and was probably made his homestead. This road to the Quinebaug Plantations also led on to Providence and became the great thoroughfare of travel between that township, Windham, Norwich and Hartford. The facilities this afforded, good land and a pleasant location, soon attracted other settlers to Merrick’s Brook. In 1701, Magoon sold farms to Samuel Palmer, John Ormsbee, and Daniel and Nathaniel Fuller, all of Rehoboth. In 1702, Josiah Kingsley, John Waldo, Nathaniel Rudd, Josiah Palmer and Ralph Wheelock purchased land of Crane and Whiting, and removed to this new settlement. Waldo’s land, in the

south of this tract, is still held by his descendants. Many Mohegans frequented this part of the town, clinging to it by virtue of Owaneco's claim to it as Mamosqueage. A hut, on the high hills near Waldo's, was long the residence of the Mooch family—kindred of Uncas and the royal line of the Mohegans.

The increase of population stimulated public improvements. Benjamin Millard was allowed, in 1700, "to set up the trade and employment of tanning." Lieutenant Crane received permission from the Court, at Hartford, "to keep a public victualing-house, for the entertainment of strangers and travelers and the retailing of strong drink," and Sergeant Hide, at the Ponde, had liberty to keep an ordinary and "retale his mathagiline so far as y<sup>e</sup> towne have power." To ensure the legal regulation of this and other matters, it was voted, "That the constables should have law books," and the colony laws were inserted among the town records. Liberty to build a sawmill on Goodman Hebard's brook, and the privilege of the stream for damming or "ponding" was granted to several petitioners—or, "if that would not answer, take any other stream." Arrangements for grinding corn not proving satisfactory, Deacon Cary, Ripley and Crane were chosen to agree with the present miller, and decided, "that he should grind for the inhabitants every Monday and Tuesday, they finding him work," and if they brought more than he could grind in the specified time he to keep on grinding till all was finished. In December, 1702, the town, for the first time, made provision for a school, directing the selectmen to agree with school-master or mistress—"scollars to pay what the rate falls short."

The meeting-house slowly attained completion. October 20, "1702, in order to do some further work about the meeting-house, "Messrs. Fitch, Crane, Ripley, Josiah Palmer and John Backus were appointed a committee to "give directions for y<sup>e</sup> doing of y<sup>e</sup> work as to y<sup>e</sup> form and manner thereof." It was agreed "to clabboard in the inside meeting-house from sill to girths, round," the committee to agree with workmen "to work about clabboarding, and in making a pulpit, and about the seats, so far as the money will go." A rate of £12 was ordered, but did not go "so far as" the seats; £10, in provision pay, were also levied in December, and that proving insufficient, in January the town was obliged to sell a hundred acres of land "to make and finish seats in meeting-house," while Mr. Whiting had the "liberty of making a pew for Mrs. Whiting and his family in as convenient a place and for bigness as the comitty shall judge meet." These arrangements being completed, in April, 1703—more than fourteen years after the founding of Windham settlement,—its first meeting-house was opened for regular occupation. Deacons Bingham



and Cary, Lieutenants Fitch and Crane, Joshua Ripley, Abraham Mitchell and Josiah Palmer were appointed—April 19—to regulate the important affair of its seating. “Rules to be observed were: (1.) age; (2.) usefulness; (3.) estate—by which is understood present list and distribution of work about meeting-house; (4.) first planters. Deacon Bingham was placed in the right hand seat below the pulpit, and his wife in the pue answerable thereto; Deacon Cary in the left-hand seat, and his wife in the pue adjoining; Joshua Ripley and Lieutenants Fitch and Crane in the fore-most pue; Abraham Mitchell at the head of the first, and Josiah Palmer of the second, seat, with their wives against them—and the remainder of the congregation in due order.” Goodwife Jennings was allowed £26, in provision pay, for sweeping the meeting-house the first year. The green around it was now enlarged and appropriated—the town having voted, December 23, 1702, “That the land east from Goodman Broughton’s, south from Thomas Huntington’s, north of the road by Goodman Broughton’s, extending to three or four acres of land onto Stony Plaine, should lay common to perpetuity.”

The completion of the meeting-house was soon followed by a division of the township. A division into north and south-end societies had been previously effected. The surveyor of Hartford County was employed to run the bounds assigned by Uncas; cast up the quantity of land, and so to divide according to agreement—“Jeremiah Ripley to go along with the artist to divide the land.” A line running a little east of north from a certain pine tree on the south to the north bound of the town, divided Joshua’s Tract into equal east and west divisions, each half containing twenty-four of the original forty-eight allotments, the dividing-line altering no man’s propriety of land. Cedar swamps were left free “to all proprietors to get cedar as they see cause, so as not to carry it out of the town to other towns.” This equitable division was allowed by the inhabitants of both ends of the town, and ratified and confirmed by the General Court, October, 1701. In the following December, Deacon Cary, Joshua Ripley, and Lieutenant Fitch were chosen by the south-end people “to agree with inhabitants of north end with respect to our orderly parting as two societies, and to give or take discharge as the case doth require with respect to our meeting on the Sabbath and other days.” Whatever agreement was made was neither satisfactory nor permanent. The territory of Windham, with its recent addition on the south and southwest, was too large and unwieldy, and its inhabitants too scattered to be easily managed by one local government, and the northern inhabitants became themselves satisfied that their interests would be promoted by an entire separation. In May, 1702, Mr. Joshua Hall represented to the General



Court, "the great difficulties, inconveniences and hazards that the inhabitants of the north part of Windham were exposed to by reason of their being settled so remote from the south part of said town, and the deep and dangerous river lying between," and requested "that they may be two townships." This request was granted, on consideration "That the north part of the town do pay their arrears of rates to the town and minister, as also, that they pay their minister's rate to the present minister at the south end of the town until they have an able, orthodox ministrie of the gospel called and settled among themselves; as also, if their bounds already granted will allow of two townships."

These terms occasioned further delay and discussion. The Ponde-town people were poorer than their southern neighbors and could with difficulty raise the required arrearages. An amicable compromise was, however, effected. The southern settlers were weary of the long Sabbath-day journeys and much preferred to worship in their own new, convenient meeting-house, and gladly consented to forego past rates on condition of release from their engagement to attend divine worship at the north end. In December, 1702, Shubael Dimmock, Joseph Hall and John Arnold—north-end committee—discharged the inhabitants of the south end from coming to the north end on Sabbath and other public days, and were themselves discharged by the south-end committee from paying anything further towards the maintenance of the minister.

Another point raised was less easily settled—the precise requirements involved in having "an able and orthodox minister of the gospel called and settled." The north-end inhabitants could hardly afford as yet a competent settlement and salary, and might only be able to hire some young, unlicensed candidate—but would that fulfill the General Court's condition? Only the Court itself could answer this important question, whereupon Mr. Joshua Ripley appeared before it, October, 1702, and gravely desired the interpretation of those words in the grant that had so perplexed the people of Windham. The Assembly returned answer:—

"That by an able and orthodox minister called and settled, they understand a person competently well-skilled in arts and languages, well-studied and well-principled in divinity, approving himself by his exercises in preaching the gospel to the judgment of those that are approved pastors and teachers of approved churches, to be a person capable of dividing the word of truth aright, to convince gainsayers, and that his conversation is such that he is a person called and qualified according to gospel rule, to be pastor of a church and in an orderly way settled in that office and work."

This list of requirements did not discourage the north inhabitants from their resolution to be a town and have a minister of their own and in May, 1703, a final separation was effected, and the west—or as then called—north part of Windham was formally erected into

the township of Mansfield, comprising twenty-four thousand-acre allotments and forty-one square miles. A part of its original territory is now included in the town of Chaplin. A patent was granted by the General Court to Shubael Dimmock, Joseph Hall, Samuel Storrs, William Hall, Kinelm Winslow, Robert Fenton, Nathaniel Bassett, John Arnold, John Davis, Benjamin Armstrong, Samuel Storrs, Jun., Joseph Homes, Mary Dunham, Susanna Wade, Peter Crane, Samuel Fuller, Allyn Nichols, Joshua Allen, John Royce, Samuel Linkon, Samuel Bliss, John Gorum, Isaac Chapman and sundry other persons, the proprietors thereof. The inhabitants of Mansfield were still allowed to attend divine service in Windham and pay for the maintenance of the minister "for such time only as they shall be without an orthodox minister of the gospel to preach the word of God unto them." A patent was also granted to the inhabitants of the "standing-part of the town," confirming to them "the south or southeast part of the late town of Windham" and the land purchased from Clark and Buckingham. "Joshua's Tract" was thus equally divided into two townships, though in the division of inhabitants Windham had much the larger share.

### XIII.

#### GROWTH. IMPROVEMENTS. SECOND MEETING-HOUSE.

HAVING reduced its bounds to more convenient dimensions, Windham was better enabled to carry out internal improvements. In 1704, highway surveyors were appointed for different parts of the town—Joseph Dingley, from the north end of the town to the meeting-house; Daniel Sabin for the south end; and John Kingsley for the Scotland farms. Daniel Ross, who had purchased an allotment in the latter quarter in 1703, was further allowed eight acres adjoining Kingsley's, paying three shillings an acre in money. The town agreed "to have but one ordinary—Lieutenant Crane to keep it." Lieutenant Fitch was chosen town-clerk, and retained many years in that office.

Windham's eastern boundary-line occasioned much trouble and controversy. This line, as laid down by Bushnell according to the direction of Uncas, followed the Nipmuck Path and ran a little west of south. The committee chosen to run the town lines in 1691 ran what they called a true south line from Appaquage for its eastern boundary, taking in a gore of Owaneco's land east of Nipmuck Path. When the new town of Plainfield was laid out, in 1700, in the

Quinebaug Country east of Windham, the appointed commissioners took for its western bound the original east line of Joshua's Tract, laid down by Bushnell, and Canterbury, when set off from Plainfield in 1704, retained this western boundary line. Windham, however, insisted that her own true south line was the boundary, and obstinately refused to yield the land between the lines to Canterbury. In 1704, Ripley, Crane and Ginnings were appointed to run the line from Appaquake to the south-east corner of the town, and to agree with owners of the land adjoining eastward with respect to straightening the line, and instructed, "To run a south line from Appaquake, or as near south as the Canterbury people will agree to, and not to agree with them further west than a straight line from Appaquake to the northeast corner of the purchased land." No satisfactory agreement was made. Windham retained the bound ran by her own committee; laid out the disputed land and levied rates on it for many years, though at the cost of much confusion and litigation.

The Indian war, which broke out afresh in 1704, enforced more attention to military organization and defences. Windham, with other frontier towns, was "not to be deserted;" its inhabitants having lands and freeholds were forbidden to remove on pain of forfeiting their estates, and any male person of sixteen years old and upward, who should presume to leave the place, would be fined ten pounds. Knapsacks, hatchets and snow-shoes were provided by the selectmen, to be ready for emergencies, and ten pounds in silver were expended for a stock of ammunition. As Windham now possessed sufficient population to form a full train-band, its company was re-organized—John Fitch appointed captain; Jonathan Crane, lieutenant; and Joseph Cary, ensign. A watch was maintained along the frontiers and houses fortified according to law, but no alarm or serious inconvenience experienced by the inhabitants.

In 1705, Messrs. Whiting; Joshua Ripley and Crane were appointed a committee for the proprietors of town lands, with power "to order any meetings, put to vote any matters to be acted and sign the acts." A division of four hundred acres of land to each allotment was ordered to be laid out, "west of a line from the northeast corner of the purchased land to Appaquake." Lieutenant Crane, Sergeants Huntington and Backus and Joshua Ripley were employed to view the land, make division and lay a highway through it. The disputed territory east of the line was also laid out.

The Scotland settlement was steadily increasing. Among the new settlers were Josiah Luce, Thomas Laselle, Robert Hebard and John Burnap. Luce and Laselle were of old Huguenot stock. Burnap came from Reading, Massachusetts, purchasing a tract of land

of Solomon Abbe, by Merrick's Brook, April 13, 1708. The high price paid for this land, £72. 10s.,—indicates a rapid rise in the value of landed property in this vicinity. A sawmill was already in operation upon Merrick's Brook, and in 1706 a highway was ordered to be laid out for the farmers of Scotland, "above the mill-dam; four rods wide on the bank of the brook, for the convenience of getting on and off a bridge about to be erected,"—and thence extending to John Ormsbee's land. The privilege of Wolf Pit Brook was granted to Josiah Palmer, in 1706, "to set up a grist-mill—he building the same within three years and ditching or damming these as he thinks needful on the commons, not to damnify particular men's rights."

The southwest part of the town adjoining the Willimantic River was as yet neglected and unoccupied. The "broad, full-watered" stream only furnished shad and salmon; its useful meadows, coarse native grass and hay. In February, 1706, the Windham proprietors granted to Joseph Cary, John Backus, Jos. Dingley and John Waldo "the privilege of the stream at Willimantic Falls to build a mill or mills at one particular place, as they shall choose, north side of the river, so long as they or their heirs shall keep and maintain a good and sufficient mill—not obstructing said proprietors from granting the like privileges to others at other places on the river; also, liberty of ditching and damming; also, the improvement of forty acres of land near Willimantic Falls—timber free, so long as y<sup>e</sup> land is left unfenced; land to be laid out by selectmen—not to obstruct highways nor damnify lots in y<sup>e</sup> Crotch; if the mills fail, the above to have y<sup>e</sup> refusal of y<sup>e</sup> land." A highway was laid out during the summer of 1707, east of the river, now developed into Main and Union streets of Willimantic Village. The forty acres of land were laid out between this highway and the river. A new mill was put up during the summer of 1706, on the site of the present saw and grist-mill privileges. Its builder was Thomas Hartshorn, mill-wright, from Charlestown, Massachusetts—the first white settler and resident of Willimantic. Thomas Davis was for a time his companion and assistant. In 1709, the proprietors of the privilege gave Mr. Hartshorn twenty acres east of the forty-acre lot "for good service," and in the March following, three or four acres were allowed to Hartshorn and Davis "to build a house on,"—the mill-house having, probably, previously afforded them accommodation. This first house in Willimantic was built in 1710, near the saw-mill. A grist-mill, the same year, was built and set in operation. The second permanent settler in the neighborhood of the Willimantic was Jonathan Babcock, of Lebanon, who purchased, September 15, 1709, for £180, a thousand-acre right accruing to the estate of Captain John Mason, taken up at the Crotch of the River—and built him a house just beyond the limits



of the present Borough, near the site of the cemetery. A highway, four rods wide, was laid out through this farm in 1710, in consideration of which the town excused Mr. Babcock "from working on highways or cutting bushes except on his own land." These two dwelling-houses and the mills comprised for many years the Willimantic settlement, but its facilities for sawing and grinding drew a large share of custom and gave it considerable importance.

The settlement at the Crotch, once so promising, received a fatal blow when it ceased to be the Centre and public worship was removed from it. Broughton and Howard removed to other parts of the town and their homesteads passed to permanent residents. Mr. Whiting still occupied the house built with so much pains and labor, but no village grew up around it. A twenty-acre land division was laid out here in 1707.

The northeast land division, ordered in 1706, opened that pleasant part of the town to settlement. The four hundred-acre lots distributed among the proprietors, were sold out to settlers. In January, 1709, David Canada, William Shaw, Robert Moulton and Edward Colburn, all of Salem, purchased one hundred acres of land on both sides of Little River, of William More, for £23, and began the settlement of a remote section—now included in the township of Hampton. A road passing through "the burnt cedar swamp" led from Windham to this settlement, and thence to the old Connecticut Path. Benjamin Howard also early purchased land in this region, between Merrick's Brook and Little River.

As population spread throughout the town, Windham Green increased in business and importance. Here were the leading men, the town-clerk, constable and justices. Here were the meeting-house, school and shops; here were the training-field and Lieutenant Crane's "ordinary." If some old residents removed from town, new ones hastened to take their places. Thomas Huntington, who removed to Mansfield in 1707, was succeeded by Samuel Webb, who was allowed, the following year, to keep a house of public entertainment and was soon called to serve on many important committees. Though the first settlers were still alert and active, their sons were fast coming on to the stage, taking up homesteads for themselves and filling public offices of trust and importance. Jonathan, the oldest son of Thomas Bingham, was a man of superior character and standing—though once threatened prosecution by the town for fencing in a spring for his private use and convenience. His youngest brother, Joseph, remained on the homestead with his father, while Abel, Samuel and Nathaniel settled in different parts of the town. Richard Abbe, son of John, married Mary, daughter of Jonathan Jennings, in 1703, and became a very



prominent, active and useful citizen. There was much good fellowship among the early Windham settlers; much feasting and merry-making and interchange of hospitalities. The young people remained at home, marrying mostly among their own towns-people, till, in process of years, nearly the whole population were knit together in one great family circle.

The Windham church, during these years, was very prosperous, and received constant accessions to its membership. The inhabitants from all parts of the town—Willimantic, Scotland, the distant settlement on Little River—attended public religious services at Windham Green, and duly paid their rates for the support of the minister. The Mansfield people, unable to fulfill the stringent conditions of the General Court, retained their connection with Windham till 1710. After the adoption of the Saybrook Platform, in 1708, as the established form of church government in Connecticut—Windham was, by its provisions, included in the North Association of Hartford County. Mr. Whiting accepted the Platform in behalf of his church, and regularly participated in the meetings of the Association. As a pastor, Mr. Whiting continued to retain the affection of his people, nor did his land operations and interest in public affairs interfere in the least with his ministerial duties and usefulness. As his family increased, his salary was proportionately enlarged, although the eighty cords of wood was gradually reduced to forty—"each man to provide according to his list or forfeit six shillings a cord,"—and was finally superseded by a ten-pound rate for ministerial fire-wood.

In 1707, the town purchased "a house and acre of land lying by the meeting-house," for a burying-place, at the cost of six pounds, to be paid in "Indian corne at two shillings a bushel, and twenty shillings more for transporting the corne to Norwich,—and those that pay money, their charge of transportation taken out of the rate; corne or money to be paid to Mr. Whiting," he making the purchase. Samuel Palmer, George Lillie and William Backus were also appointed to view ground in the east part of the town suitable for a burying-ground, and take advice of some of the neighborhood, and the Scotland settlers had thus their first burial-place laid out.

The meeting-house so long in building gave brief satisfaction. It was small, poorly built and every way inconvenient. A committee was appointed, in 1708, "to agree with workmen to finish the galleries, repair the under-pinning and the breaches in the seats." A rate was ordered the same year for a "pound and pulpit-cushion;" and Deacon Cary, Captain Fitch and Joshua Ripley directed "to seat the meeting-house at their best judgment."

Schools received less attention in Windham than might be expected

in a town of such prosperity and intelligence—"a school to be kept in Thomas Snell's house" being, apparently, the only provision made for the whole township. The committee appointed to manage the schools may have ordered them, however, in different neighborhoods. In 1711, the town voted "to have no more school committees, but leave the matter to the selectmen." Two school-houses were ordered in 1713; one, eighteen feet square, to be set on the Green, "not above twenty rods from the meeting-house; the other, sixteen feet square, in the east of the town." John Backus and James Badcock were chosen a committee, to agree with workmen to build the school-houses. That on the Green was soon completed, the other "protracted" for two years.

The highway surveyors were ordered, in 1713, to portion out the town for convenience in mending highways. Joseph Dingley was appointed "to call out the inhabitants east of the Willimantic and north from meeting-house; Stephen Tracey to call all those who dwelt west of Willimantic and Shetucket; John Burnap and John Bemis were to warn all who lived east from John Ormsbee's, the whole length and breadth of the tract; while to Richard Abbe was assigned "all south of meeting-house." The town also gave liberty to Plainfield proprietors "to join their field with that of proprietors south and west of Shetucket River, so that the highway by that River to the mill [at Willimantic] and that over the upper riding-place to Norwich might be pent-ways—provided Plainfield makes and maintains good, handy gates."

In 1713, the town voted to raise forty pounds for the enlargement of the meeting-house, and were preparing an addition twenty feet wide, the length and hight of the house, when the committee were requested to forbear working—and, after some delay and discussion, it was decided to build an entirely new edifice, "to be set on the old meeting-house site or at the nearest place convenient." Deacons Cary and Bingham and Lieutenant Crane were a committee to agree with workmen—the latter also acting as treasurer,—and under their direction this important work was speedily and successfully accomplished. No special report is found of its dimensions and appearance, but it was doubtless much larger and more elegant than the first house, though, perhaps, not equal to Woodstock's second meeting-house. Mr. Whiting was allowed to build a pew for the accommodation of his family, and received from the town a formal grant "of the place in the meeting-house where the pue stands, by the east door, that is known by the name of Mr. Whiting's pue, and has been wholly erected at Mr. Whiting's charge." The floor of the house was mainly occupied with seats, whose orderly seating was determined by Joshua Ripley, Abraham

Mitchell, Josiah Palmer and John Fitch, on the following prescribed rules :—

- I. The place or station that persons are in.
- II. The age they bear.
- III. The estate they enjoy.

Ripley and Fitch were themselves honored with the chief seat in front. The venerable Joseph Dingley was allowed to sit in the pulpit, because of his deafness, and his son, Eleazer, in the third front seat, and his wife in the corner seat answerable thereto. The seat allowed to Abel Bingham not giving satisfaction, the town voted, "That he should remove out of the seat he was formerly seated in and sett in second pue." Several of the young men—Joseph Crane, Josiah Bingley, Zebulon Webb, Jeremiah Ripley, Jun., Jonathan Huntington, David Ripley and Ebenezer Wales—built a pew for themselves, probably in the gallery, and petitioned the town "that it may continue and we have liberty to set therein," which request was granted, on condition "that if they removed out of the pue they should deliver it to the town without demolishment." To modify the temperature of the unwarmed house as far as possible, it was ordered "That in cold and windy weather the windward doors should be kept shut ; leeward ones only opened." Two pounds, in provision pay, were allowed annually for sweeping the meeting-house.

## XIV.

### CANADA PARISH.

THE northeast section of Windham gained steadily in population and importance, despite its remoteness and inaccessibility. Its soil was good and cheap ; its situation pleasant and attractive. A commanding eminence, encircled by Appaquage or Little River, and encompassed by fertile valleys—now known as Hampton Hill—was deemed a favorable site for a settlement and village, and, by a land distribution in 1712, was opened to purchasers. Nathaniel Hovey bought land in this vicinity in 1713 ; and soon settled upon it. "A hundred acres of Appaquage Hill" were soon after sold by Jennings to Timothy Pearl. "The Appaquage Lot" and "land on Little River" were purchased by John Durkee, of Gloucester, in 1715. Abiel and Robert Holt, of Andover ; Nathaniel Kingsbury, of Massachusetts ; Thomas Fuller, John Button, George Allen and others also settled on or near this attractive hill, and helped build up what was known as Windham Village. A few sons of old Windham families like Ebenezer Abbe

and Stephen Howard joined in this settlement, but the greater part of the settlers were new-comers from Massachusetts. This circumstance, and their great distance from the place of worship, led these settlers to seek for religious services in their own neighborhood as soon as practicable, and, in 1715, they petitioned the town of Windham for liberty to form a separate religious society. The town took the matter into serious consideration, and appointed Captain Fitch, Lieutenant Crane, Joshua Ripley, Jonathan Jennings, Josiah Palmer and Nathaniel Hebard, "to consider the proposals of our northeast neighbors, with some appointed by them as they shall agree, to lay a skeem for bounds of a parish." While this was pending, other privileges were allowed them. Edward Colburn and Joshua Lasell were appointed fence-viewers for the northeast part of the town, and Jonathan Bingham to view a place for burying-place, after which view the town granted its northeast inhabitants liberty "to take off upon the east side of the highway by Cedar Swamp Brook, part of the highway for a convenient burying-place, they leaving the highway four rods wide by said brook—burying-place not to extend above twenty rods in length." Liberty to build a pound was also given. Thomas Fuller was appointed to keep a tavern in the northeast part, and "Robert Moulton, brander for same, himself to find branding-iron."

In December, 1716, the town consented "that the northeast part be a parish," receiving one-fourth part of John Cates' legacy and having two hundred pounds returned to them which they had paid towards the new meeting-house. In April, the town empowered Nathaniel Kingsbury and Captain Aaron Cook to give and deliver the following petition to the General Assembly:—

"We, inhabitants of the northeast part of Windham, having obtained consent of said Windham that we should be a society distinct for the carrying on the public worship of God, do now pray your Honors to confirm and establish us as a parish. We are the more encouraged in this our request when we reflect upon your Honors' constant care for promoting religion and good order, which is one great end in this our desire: it being extremely difficult for us to attend upon the present place of worship, none of us being within six miles of it, and many of us much more. We also hope, by the blessing of Providence, that we shall be able to support and bear the charge of the public worship, being already between twenty and thirty families and having accommodations for a great many more, who will doubtless be much encouraged to settle among us.

Thomas Durkee.  
Robert Moulton.  
James Luce.  
George Martin.  
George Allen.  
John Button.

Job Durfee.  
Nathaniel Hovey.  
Clement Neff.  
Jeremiah Durkee.  
John Scripture.  
Timothy Pearl.

Ebenezer Abbe.  
William Durkee.  
Joshua Lasell.  
Edward Colburn.

May 9, 1717."

Contrary to the usual fate of first petitions for society privileges, this request was at once considered and granted, and the northeast part of Windham set off as a distinct parish—its south bound "beginning



at Canterbury line, to run westerly in the south line of Thomas Lasell's lot, and so in direct course to Merrick's Brook, and then the said brook to be the line until it intersects the present road that leads from said town to the Burnt Cedar Swamp, and from thence a straight line to the brook that empties itself into Nauchaug River about the middle of Six-Mile Meadow, at the place where Mansfield line crosseth the said brook,"—the new parish comprising all Windham territory north of this line. These privileges were granted, on condition "that the petitioners annually levy and pay a tax among themselves equal with what the rest of the town pay toward the support of the ministry, until the said parish now granted have a settled ministry amongst themselves, which tax shall be paid in unto Captain John Fitch, of Windham, and by his advice laid out towards providing for and support of the ministry in said new parish."

No record is preserved of the organization of this second society in Windham but it was probably soon effected. The name usually applied to it—Canada Parish—commemorated its first settler of whom little is known but the fact of his purchase and settlement. It is believed that David Canada built the first house in this section and kept the first tavern, but he probably died early, as his name does not appear among the first petitioners or church members nor is there any allusion to him in Windham town or church records. David and Isaac Canada, probably his sons, appear among the inhabitants at a later date.

The new society chose for its committee, John and William Durkee and Nathaniel Hovey. Their first care and object was to establish public religious worship. They found its attainment far more difficult than they had anticipated. A new settlement with little money and no public land could not, unaided, provide means for meeting-house and minister's settlement. A large part of their land was owned by Windham proprietors and a tax on this land seemed their only feasible resource. October 15, 1717, the northeast parish again appeared before the Assembly, and humbly petitioned:—

"That, whereas, your Honors have made us a parish and we have still need of further aid and beg for power to elect and empower such listers for our own society as may be needful and, also, seeing our remoteness from any other society where divine worship is publicly attended doth put us on earnest desire to promote what speed we can among ourselves, pray you to consider our low circumstances, and grant us the improvement of what public tax may be raised among us for some time following, and that what further charge shall be necessary for minister and meeting-house may be laid on the lands within our parish, seeing the lands are much advanced in their value by such a settlement.

EBENEZER ABBE, for the rest.  
WILLIAM DURKEE."

The Windham proprietors, who had just been assessed so heavily for their own second meeting-house on Windham Green, were very

indignant at the demand for aid, and at once dispatched a spirited remonstrance, praying :—

“That the Honored Court will not allow our lands taxed for the new society. Can see no reason why this society should ascribe the advance of the price of our lands so much to their settling near them as to expect the whole profit thereof to accrue to them, seeing the land in the country in general is as much, and more, risen in value than that, and their land is risen in price equal to ours, and as much by means of *our* settling near *them*—(for which advantage we ask them nothing). Why, then, cannot they content themselves with the profit of their own estates, especially as they have purchased the choice and best of land within our limits and the remainder so poor as not likely to be of any advantage to ourselves for herbage and timber? And we cannot but think it more agreeable to their professing an earnest desire to promote the worship of God among themselves, to have attended to the direction of the General Court by a diligent care to provide some stock out of their own estate, rather than wholly to neglect their duty therein, and not so much as gather a list among themselves. But if their circumstances be as low as they pretend, so that they cannot maintain a minister without our help, we humbly pray, if your Honors think fit, to restore them to us again, for it was easier for us to maintain a minister without their help for them and us—which, probably, may content them for the present—rather than be rated at their pleasure to settle and maintain another.”

This representation from men of such consideration as the Windham proprietors was not without effect but did not secure the entire rejection of the petition and, in May, 1718, the Assembly ordered :—

“That all the unimproved lands lying within the limits of said parish shall be taxed at the rate of ten shillings per hundred acres, to defray parish charges, and that the petitioners shall be freed from paying country rates during the term of four years, for the better enabling them to support the ministry; and, also, that they have liberty granted of being a military company within said parish, and to have such officers as are allowed by law.”

The neglect to state the time for the continuance of the land tax called out a new petition in October, and the additional enactment :—

“That said tax shall continue at ten shillings *per annum* for every hundred acres of land unimproved as aforesaid, for the term of four years.”

Still, the troubles of the new society were not relieved. The collection of this tax involved them in quarrels and difficulties. The act granting it had made no provision for gathering it and the disturbed Canadians were again constrained to appeal to the General Court, October, 1721, which ordered that the assessment should be paid in December each year, and appointed William Avery, Thomas Marsh and Nathaniel Kingsbury, tax-receivers, with full powers “to make distress in any part of this government, upon the goods or estates of such owners or proprietors of land within said parish as neglected to pay their just proportion.” But even this provision failed to meet the emergency. Some who owned land in Canada Parish lived out of the Colony, and the goods and estates of others who refused to pay could not be reached without great difficulty, which would necessitate the seizure of their land for the payment of the tax, and “it was judiciously thought by most of the inhabitants that none

would appear to buy such small parcels of land at such a rate as men under oath must prize them," and so the committee would never be able to *vend* any land, and the tax-money would be lost—at which direful prospect the afflicted Parish comes again to the Court "as a child to a father; begging you to look upon us as one of your sons and grant us relief, for if we lose the money due it will be very prejudicial to this society in this, the day of small things." In response to this request, the Assembly granted "liberty and full power to the committee to sell said land at public vendue and to execute good and ample deeds to purchasers—provided that sufficient notice be made to owners sixty days before,—notice to be set up on Windham sign-post. Owners to have liberty to redeem land within one year."

Under this authority, the Canada settlers were enabled to collect a portion of what had been allowed them and make some progress in the construction of their meeting-house. The accession of substantial citizens from time to time encouraged and strengthened them—Samuel Ashley, of Hartford; Paul and Philip Abbot, of Andover, John Clarke, William Farnham, Nathaniel Flint, and Benjamin Bedlock,—settling in this vicinity prior to the formation of the church. A minister was procured as soon as practicable; preaching at first in private houses. Some other improvements were effected. David Canada and Nathaniel Hovey were appointed surveyors of highways in the northeast parish, and its inhabitants received "liberty to build a pound in the great street near the meeting-house, provided it be done at their own charge." The widow of Thomas Fuller was also allowed to keep a house of public entertainment.

Early in 1722, the society secured the services of Mr. William Billings, of Preston, who was graduated from Yale College in 1720, and had just completed his preparation for the ministry, and soon proceeded to call him to settlement. As the four years respite from paying country taxes had now expired and the meeting-house was far from completed, the inhabitants of Windham Village again appeared before the General Court with a humble petition, informing—

"The Honorable Court that our circumstances are very grievous; a very poor parish; new settlers; parish small; have engaged to give Mr. Billings £150 for settlement and five-pence a pound on ratable estate till it comes to £90 for salary—and we shall be glad and evermore have cause to thank the honored Court if they would be pleased to consider our poverty and difficult circumstances. We are but thirty-five little families, and we ha'n't a bit of land to settle our ministry upon but what we must buy at five seven, eight and nine pound per hundred Eacaars. We pray the Cort to abate our tax for two years next coming, and it will forever oblige us. JOHN DURKEE, WILLIAM DURKEE, NATHANIEL HOVEY, in behalf of the inhabitants. May, 12, 1722."

Fearful lest their continual coming should have worn out the patience of the Honorable Court, this petition was sent to their neighbor, Mr. Timothy Pierce—the deputy from Plainfield, and one of its

most prominent citizens—with a letter, praying him “as one not unacquainted with our poverty, to befriend us what you can in this matter,” and by his friendly services a favorable answer was secured. The way was thus at last opened for the settlement of the minister. A hundred acres of land were sold by Samuel Ashley to William Billings, “evangelical predicatore for Windham Village.” The meeting-house, though far from completed, was probably made ready for occupation on the day of ordination. This happy event was joyfully celebrated in June, 1723, and doubtless the inhabitants of all the surrounding country gathered in Windham Village on this interesting occasion. The proceedings of the day were thus recorded by Mr. Billings:—

“The Council that embodied y<sup>e</sup> Church and carried on y<sup>e</sup> affair when Mr. Billings was ordained pastor in Windham Village: Samuel Whiting and messengers, Eliphelet Adams [of New London], Samuel Estabrook [of Canterbury], Joseph Coit [of Plainfield], Ebenezer Williams [of Pomfret]. Mr. Adams gave the charge; Mr. Estabrook the right hand of fellowship; Mr. Coit preached; Mr. Coit made the last prayer—thus all was completed, June 5, 1723.”

The following church covenant was then read and subscribed:—

“WINDHAM VILLAGE, *June 5, 1723*, being y<sup>e</sup> day of ordination. We do this day, in the strength of Christ, humbly and heartily avouch the Lord, whose name alone is Jehovah, Father, Son and Spirit, to be our God and the God of our seed, entirely and everlastingly dedicating both ourselves and ours unto his holy fear and service according to his word; promising and covenanting to walk with God, and love one another as God's chosen people and a particular church of Christ ought to do; complying with y<sup>e</sup> whole will of God so far as he hath been pleased, or shall further please, to discover his mind to us by his Spirit, word and providence; acknowledging, embracing and submitting unto the Lord Jesus, God-man, as head of the church, prophet, priest and king of our souls, y<sup>e</sup> only mediator between God and man and surety of y<sup>e</sup> new covenant, that he may of God be made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption, looking for acceptation only in Christ both of our persons and services.

Rev. William Billings, pastor.  
Nathaniel Kingsbury.  
Ebenezer Abbe.  
George Martin.  
Joseph Jennings.  
Nathaniel Hovey.  
Samuel Ashley.  
John Clarke.

John Durkee.  
William Durkee.  
Jeremiah Durkee.  
Thomas Marsh.  
William Farnham.  
John Scripture.  
Nathaniel Flint.  
Benjamin Bidlock.”

At a church meeting, June 19, John Durkee and Thomas Marsh were clearly chosen deacons. It was also voted, “Y<sup>t</sup> we look upon any baptized person in this place as under the watch and care of the church.” The deacons, with Nathaniel Kingsbury and William Durkee, were chosen representatives of the church—office not defined. The population of Windham Village and the surrounding parish was now rapidly increasing. During 1723 and 1724, there united with the church: Abiel Holt, David Warren, Paul Abbot, Matthias Marsh, William Averill, James Utley, Daniel Button, Timothy Pearl, Robert Willis, Jacob and John Preston, Ebenezer Crocker, Nath. Woodward,



Robert Holt, Ebenezer Martin, John Badcock, Philip Abbot, with many of the wives and daughters of the settlers. Among those simply "owning the covenant" during these years, were Margaret, wife of David Canada; Sarah, wife of Joseph Jennings; Stephen Fuller, Nathaniel Barker, William Shaw, Jon. Hendee, Thomas Durkee, Samuel Coburn, Joshua Holt, Joseph Laselle, Isaac Canada, Nath. Ford, Robert Coburn, Samuel Blanchard and Benjamin Preston. The large number of residents not connected with the church called out the following regulations:—

"February 4, 1725, voted, Y<sup>t</sup> we look upon every baptized person to be a subject of church discipline and ought to be called to an account by some church or another, whenever they offend.

Also, it is y<sup>e</sup> duty of that church where the Providence of God hath made persons (baptized or not in full communion) inhabitants, to call them to account and to see that the laws of Christ's Kingdom are put in due execution on them when they offend.

Also—February 18,—That when any communicant of other churches settle with us, we will desire a letter of recommendation of them from y<sup>e</sup> church whence they came, and if any such person shall neglect to procure y<sup>e</sup> same, after reasonable time, we will deny such persons church privileges unless there appears to be some peculiar reasons."

On the same day, it was also voted:—

"Y<sup>t</sup> we do take y<sup>e</sup> Word of God to be our platform in all y<sup>e</sup> management of Christ's discipline."

So great was the increase of population in Canada Parish that, in 1724, a full military company was formed there, with Stephen Howard for captain, Nathaniel Kingsbury for lieutenant, and Samuel Gardner, ensign—and at least sixty privates between the ages of sixteen and sixty. Schools were provided as soon as practicable, selectmen, surveyors and other useful officers appointed, so that the parish was every way well established and accommodated, and its inhabitants only needed to repair to Windham Green for town-meetings. With this growth and general prosperity, they would have been able to pay country rates and finish their meeting-house but for drought, short crops and other discouragements, whereby they were again compelled, in 1726, to petition the General Court, "To have their rates allowed them, because their unhappy difficulties, short crops of late years and the great charge of settling a minister had yet hindered the people from finishing their meeting-house, though they had labored with all the dilligence in their power." In response to this plea, presented by Thomas Marsh and George Martin, "one year was granted and no more;" after which the second society of Windham was obliged to bear her part of the burdens of the Colony.

## XV.

## GENERAL ADVANCEMENT. RELIGIOUS REVIVAL. DEATH OF MR. WHITING. SETTLEMENT OF MR. CLAP.

THE Scotland settlers still maintained their connection with the first church of Windham, though their number was constantly increasing. George Lilly purchased land on both sides Little River in 1710. John Robinson, a descendant of Elder John Robinson, of Leyden, removed to Scotland in 1714. The old Puritan stock was well represented in this locality. Descendants of Robinson, Brewster and Bradford, with French Huguenots and Scotch Presbyterians, were among its inhabitants. A straggling village grew up around the pound and school-house. Many sons of the first Windham settlers established themselves in this vicinity. Joseph and John Carey settled on Merrick's Brook, on land given them by their father, Deacon Carey. Deacon Bingham's son, Samuel, settled on Merrick's Brook; Nathaniel on Beaver Brook. Nathaniel, son of Joseph Huntington, occupied a farm on Merrick's Brook near the centre of the settlement, and became one of its most prominent citizens. The population was mainly gathered in the vicinity of Merrick's Brook and on the road leading to Canterbury. Many of the Scotland settlers were members of the Windham church, and actively concerned in the business and management of the town.

In Willimantic, there was yet little progress. In 1718, the town granted "Ephraim Sawyer, or to any other person that shall appear and accept, the liberty and privilege of the stream at the falls at Willimantic River in said town—provided that he or they shall build and erect a forge or iron works thereon, so long as they shall maintain them,"—but the privilege was not accepted, and the saw and grist-mills remained in sole possession of the field. A pound was added to the settlement in 1721, and one was also allowed "near Stephen Tracy's dwelling-house at Crotch of River, between Deacon Skiff's house and Sergeant Backus's field." In 1726, another attempt was made to utilize the unused water power. John Devotion, of Suffield, purchased two acres of land of Ebenezer Babcock, "on the northeast side of Willimantic River," embracing the privilege known in old deeds as Sliding Falls, now owned by the Willimantic Linen Company. Mr. Devotion, with Daniel Badger, Samuel Hathaway and Joseph Kellog, all of Suffield, formed a company for manufacturing iron, under the name of "Daniel Badger and Co." They purchased an "iron mine" of Deacon Nathaniel Skiff, in the town of Mansfield—agreeing to pay two shillings-sixpence a ton, if three tons of ore made one ton of iron, and

so on in that proportion. Preparations for damming and bridging the stream and the erection of forges were commenced during this year. The first bridge across the Shetucket was built in 1722, by Stephen Tracy, Jos. Hebard, Ralph Wheelock and Ebenezer Wright, and was maintained by them many years at great cost and trouble.

Windham Green continued to gain in influence and importance as the seat of town government and the business centre of so many flourishing settlements. A Court of Probate was established here in October, 1719, for the towns of Windham, Lebanon, Coventry, Mansfield, Canterbury, Plainfield, Killingly, Pomfret and Ashford, and added much to its business and importance. Captain John Fitch was appointed the first judge of the Probate Court, but still retained his position as town clerk of Windham. Several improvements were effected. In 1721, it was voted, "that the town street should be made eight rods wide, to begin at Deacon Bingham's, southeast corner of his house-lot, and go to the northeast corner of Gentleman Mitchell's house." A new pound was built near the meeting-house. John Backus had liberty "to set a shop in the highway near Ginning's house—not to damnify highway."—and Amos Kingley "the privilege of the spring in the highway near Caleb Conant's house, for the benefit of tanning, he setting his tan-trough on the north side of the highway, near his father's fence, and to enjoy it during the town's pleasure." In 1726, the highways and commons were pronounced "sufficiently clear" and the town permitted "to cease cutting bushes." The population of Windham had now so increased that a second military company was organized, with Eleazer Carey for Captain, Edward Waldo for lieutenant, and Nathaniel Rudd for ensign. Jeremiah Ripley, Jun., was lieutenant of the first company. The sons of the first settlers were now active in public affairs. Jonathan Huntington, son of Joseph, was practicing as Windham's first regular physician. His brother Joseph had married Elizabeth, daughter of Joshua Ripley. Joshua Ripley, Jun., married a daughter of John Backus. John Backus, Jun., married a daughter of Mr. Whiting, and thus the families of Windham were twined and intertwined together. Jonathan Crane's son, Isaac, married Ruth Waldo, of Scotland, whose favor he had won by gallantly conveying her on his own steed through the swollen waters of Merrick's Brook, when a sudden Sunday freshet had made it impassable for foot travelers. Among the new inhabitants of Windham was Thomas Dyer, who removed thither in 1715, when twenty-one years of age, married Lydia, daughter of John Backus, was first a shoemaker and farmer, but soon engaged in public affairs, and became one of the most prominent and wealthy citizens of the town. Eleazer Carey,

nephew of Deacon Joseph, removed to Windham in 1718. Deacon Joseph Carey died in 1722.

The first church of Windham, during these years, shared in the prosperity of the town. The ministry of Mr. Whiting was greatly blessed to his people. While conservative in his views, a warm friend of the Ecclesiastical constitution of Connecticut, and even favoring "a moderate Episcopacy,"—his preaching was eminently spiritual and awakening. In 1720 and 1721, his church enjoyed a season of special religious interest—the more remarkable as occurring at a time when revivals were almost unknown and the churches very cold and indifferent, so that the Windham church was compared to Gideon's fleece, which was filled with moisture when all around it was dry. This work was wrought "without extraordinary apparent occasion, but through the secret operation of the spirit of God upon the heart. Persons of all ages, and some of whom there was but little expectation, came together weeping to seek the Lord their God, so that within the compass of about half a year four-score persons were joined to the communion." Residents of neighboring towns were drawn to attend these meetings, and young men were converted who were among the most prominent actors in the religious developments of a later period. In acknowledgment of this great blessing, a special thanksgiving service was observed, February 12, 1721, and a sermon preached by Mr. Whiting, from 1st Thess.; iii: 8—"For now we live, if ye stand fast in the Lord;" from which text this doctrine was deduced: "All godly persons, and especially they that have taken pains with people for their good, will be much refreshed and comforted, and it will help to balance the trouble they meet with when they that have been brought over to the acknowledgment of the truth do stand fast in the Lord." This sermon was shortly published, with an introduction by the Rev. Mr. Adams, of New London, giving some account of this wonderful work of grace, and closing with the ejaculation:—

"Oh, that the same good spirit from on high were poured out upon the rest of the country, for what pity is it that this single *place* only should be *wet with the dew of Heaven*, while the rest of the ground round about remains (comparatively) dry!"

This day of rejoicing and thanksgiving was followed ere long by one of mourning and lamentation. Mr. Whiting died suddenly of pleurisy, when absent from home on a visit at Enfield, September 27, 1725, in the fifty sixth year of his age. Though his sickness was short and distressing, he did not forget his friends and people, but offered two special prayers upon his death-bed—one for his family, and one for the continuance and prosperity of his church. He left a widow and thirteen children—the youngest, Nathan, then but little more than a year old—and ample provision for their maintenance and education. "Upon



the certain and sorrowful intelligence" of the death of their beloved pastor, the people of Windham were overwhelmed with grief and apprehensions. A number of the neighboring ministers were invited by the town authorities to keep with them "a day of humiliation, witnessed by solemn fasting and earnest prayer to God for his guidance and direction in y<sup>e</sup> weighty affair of calling and settling a minister among us to supply the place now vacant,"—who, upon conclusion of the day's services, gave the following counsel: "That they should first apply themselves to Mr. Welsted, a Fellow of Cambridge, and if he could not come, to Mr. Osgood, of Andover; and, if he refused, to Mr. Dunbar, of Boston; and then repair to the President at Cambridge." A special town-meeting was immediately warned by the selectmen, "that the town might have an opportunity to consider what to do in order to the calling and settlement of a gospel minister," when it was voted, unanimously, "To comply with the advice of the Reverend ministers." Seven of the leading men in town were then chosen a committee, "to call a minister on trial for a quarter of a year." The committee did not secure either of the candidates recommended, but Mr. Thomas Clap,\* of Scituate, Massachusetts, a Cambridge graduate of the class of 1722. After some experience of his ministerial gifts, to the general satisfaction, the town proceeded to call him, February 22, 1726, to settlement—offering, with their usual liberality, three hundred pounds for settlement, one hundred pounds salary and firewood. These terms being accepted, and the church concurring, a committee was chosen, July 1, 1726, "to provide and bring together sugar, spices, provisions and whatever else was needful for the entertainment, in a decent way, of the ministers and managers that should attend the work of ordination," and a contribution was ordered, "at the conclusion of Fast-day meeting, to help defray y<sup>e</sup> charge of ordination, each person to write his name on the back side of the bill that he contributed, and the committee to keep account." These arrangements being perfected, Mr. Clap was formally ordained, with all due ceremony, August 3, 1726, but no record was made of the services of the occasion.

The Windham church was then in a very prosperous condition, having received three hundred and eighty-three members during the ministry of Mr. Whiting, and, after dismissing colonies to Mansfield and Windham Village, still numbered two hundred and sixty-four. The recent revival had increased its strength and spirituality, and Mr. Clap began his ministry under the most favorable auspices. With the

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\* It was Mr. Clap, and *not* Mr. Whiting, as erroneously stated, page 69, who studied theology for a time with the celebrated Dr. McSparran, rector of St. Paul's church, North Kingston, R. I.

new minister, new deacons were also elected—Eleazer Cary, Jos. Huntington, Nathaniel Wales and Abel Bingham being inducted in that office in 1726. Joshua Ripley, John Fitch and Jonathan Crane, chosen as representatives of the brethren to act with the deacons, made up the “seven pillars” or counsellors, so dear to the early settlers, and “were recommended unto the pastor to be called together on all emergent occasions for him to consult with.”

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## XVI.

### THE QUINEBAUG COUNTRY. PEAGSCOMSUCK.

THE third town organized within Windham County limits was Plainfield, which was laid out in 1699, in the Quinebaug country, east of Windham. This Quinebaug Country, extending from the junction of the Quinebaug and Assawaga Rivers to the north bound of Norwich town, and from the Appaquake or Little River eastward to Egunk, was claimed by two powerful parties—Fitz John and Wait Winthrop, as representatives of their deceased father, Governor John Winthrop, and Major James Fitch, as agent and guardian of Owaneco. The Winthrop claim was founded on a deed from Allumps and Massashowet, resident sachems in 1653; Owaneco's, on the hereditary title of the Mohegan sachems. The General Court of Connecticut had “allowed the Governor his purchase,” and also allowed Uncas to dispose of Quinebaug lands to Owaneco. The first land laid out in this disputed country was the six hundred acres levied from Uncas and Owaneco, “for satisfaction for their men's burning the county prison.” Fitch, as treasurer of New London County, was ordered “to dispose of the land and build said prison therefrom,” and selected the richest part of the Quinebaug valley, on both sides of the river. Deeds of sale, June 23, 1680, conveyed this land to John, Daniel and Solomon Tracy and Richard Bushnell, all of Norwich, who at once “seized and quietly possessed it.” A neck of land “below the river island, Peagscomsuck,” granted by Owaneco to Fitch, was also laid out in 1680. Other large tracts in the Quinebaug Country were given to Fitch by Owaneco—“land and meadow east of the Quinebaug, bounded south on Norwich town line, thence northeast to the great brook that comes in at Peagscomsuck . . . excepting that already sold to John Tracy;” “land both sides the Little River that comes in at Wequa-nock . . . bounded south on Norwich town line, west on New

Plantation, land of Joshua, deceased ;" "land east side of Little River, taking all the corne and plaine, improvable land;" a mile in breadth from Appaquake to the Quinebaug, bounded north on the Wabbaquasset Country, east on the Quinebaug, west on New Plantation and south on common land,—were among the gifts thus lavishly bestowed.

Neither Fitch nor the Winthrops attempted settlement of this land during the troubled years of Andross' administration, but as soon as practicable after the restoration of colonial government, initiated movements in this direction. The double claim and doubtful land-titles were unfavorable to its early occupation. No organized colony, like those of Woodstock and Windham, would choose to venture on such debatable territory, but only such rash or resolute settlers as were willing to risk ejectment or litigation. The confusion of titles makes it impossible to trace the order of settlement, as deeds subsequently pronounced invalid were not inscribed on the records of the future township. October 13, 1690, Fitz John and Wait Winthrop petitioned the General Court, "That their right to a certain tract, bought of Allumps by their father, might be confirmed to them for the benefit of those about to settle a plantation there." No reply was granted to this request, but despite this lack of confirmation, the plantation was begun. A number of Massachusetts families took possession of Quinebaug land east of the river, purchased of the Winthrops soon after 1690. Timothy and Thomas Pierce came from Woburn, Thomas Williams, from Stow; Joseph Parkhurst, Jacob Warren, Edward, Joseph and Benjamin Spalding, from Chelmsford; Matthias Button and James Kingsbury, from Haverhill; Ebenezer Harris and John Fellows, from Ipswich; Isaac Wheeler, Isaac and Samuel Shepard, with their step-father, Nathaniel Jewell, from Concord. Other families removed thither from Connecticut towns, below: Peter Crery, James Deane, William Marsh and Edward Yeomans, from Stonington; William Douglas, from New London; and others from that vicinity. Several Gallup brothers—sons of Captain John Gallup, of Stonington—purchased land and, perhaps, removed to the Quinebaug plantation. Most of the settlers received their deeds from the Winthrops; James Welch, Thomas Harris, James and John Deane and Philip Bump purchased land of Fitch and John Tracy. The most northerly settlers were the young Shepard brothers—sons of Ralph Shepard, of Malden, deceased—who bought land at the mouth of Moosup's River, given by Owaneco to Samuel Lathrop, of Norwich. The Spaldings were probably a mile or two south of the Shepards, but the great body of the settlers were south of the site of the present Plainfield village.

Very little is known of the early days of the Quinebaug plantation. No organization was effected, or even attempted, for several years.

The settlers broke up their land, built rude habitations and made some few improvements. They had a fine country, well watered and not too heavily timbered. Black Hill, so named by the first settlers, had been burned over every year for an Indian hunting ground. The valley adjoining the Quinebaug was found to produce extraordinary crops of corn and in spite of Fitch and Tracy injunctions, was used as a common cornfield for the settlement. Portions of this field were set aside for their Indian neighbors, who were very numerous but peaceable and friendly, and willingly allowed the settlers to share their fisheries, hunting grounds and planting lands. Fears were at first entertained and garrison houses provided, but it was found needless "to make any great matter of use of them." No attempt was made to lay out public highways. The old Greenwich Path led on to Providence, and rude ways were trodden out to Norwich, New London and Windham. Needful supplies were procured at these distant settlements, and religious services occasionally attended.

Society was, for a time, in a most rude, chaotic state. The double land claim occasioned much confusion. The Fitch and Winthrop adherents were at open war with each other. Major Fitch was especially careless as to the character of his tenants, and had great difficulty in collecting rents from them. The first existing records relating to the Quinebaug Plantation tell of oppression, violence, resistance to legal authority, and other high-handed misdemeanors. In the summer of 1695, Benjamin Spalding, Thomas Brooks, Obadiah Johnson, John Smith and Dan Edwards were summoned before the Court of New London County, "to answer complaint of Major James Fitch, for cutting and carting away hay from his farm at Peagscomsuck," and were sentenced to pay each five shillings to Major Fitch, the same amount to the Treasury and costs. Benjamin Palmer, tenant of Major Fitch, was next arraigned, not only for refusing to pay the rent of the Peagscomsuck farm and improving a parcel of barley that did not belong to him, but for abusing the person of the collector, Richard Adams, by striking him several blows and for profanely swearing that he would kill Major Fitch and the marshal. For these various offences, he was adjudged to pay a fine of £70, or be whipped fifteen stripes on his naked body. To satisfy this demand, Marshal Plumb stripped Palmer of nearly all his worldly substance, consisting of nine stacks of meadow hay, stacks of oats, barley, rye and flax, corn in the ear and unhusked and eight bushels in the chamber, garden stuff, swine and working oxen—"too much for the debt, but no surplus returned." Palmer, by advice of his attorney, John Gallup, sued Plumb for damages. Other actions were brought against Palmer for refusing to make satisfaction and improper language, but were finally

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settled or withdrawn. Samuel Cleveland, the tenant succeeding Palmer, was reduced to still greater suffering by over-extortion of produce for rent, so that the Major himself wrote to Thomas Brooks and Benjamin Spalding, "That they should deliver to said Cleveland all that might be judged needful for his present necessities." John Gallup, James Deane and Nathaniel Jewell were also brought to trial for mowing grass and carting off loads of hay from the land claimed by the Tracys. John Smith, a Winthrop land-holder, was accused of illegal seizure of land sold by Owaneco to Stephen Merrick; Peter Crery, of forcibly entering upon Owaneco's land and cutting off timber. Others were arrested for carting off hay and grain and appropriating logs and rails. The New London Court was largely occupied with cases from the Quinebaug Country. Fines were levied, whipping and imprisonment inflicted. The Gallups were leaders of the Winthrop faction and the largest resident land-owners, and one of them, according to tradition, gave such offence to the planters by greed and over-measurement that he was driven out of the plantation as a "land grabber." In 1699, the Winthrops attempted to bring the question of proprietorship to an issue by entering complaints against Major Fitch and Judge Tracy, for entering upon land belonging to the plaintiffs. The cases were tried before the Court of Common Pleas for New London County, and verdict being allowed to the defendants, appealed to a higher tribunal.

In spite of these quarrels and disturbances, the Quinebaug Plantation gained in numbers and strength. The first inhabitants west of the Quinebaug were probably the tenants at Peagscomsuck. Rowland Jones, who purchased in 1691, four hundred acres of land on what is still Rowland's Brook, was one of the first west-side settlers. Thomas Brooks and Obadiah Johnson also settled west of the Quinebaug, but little progress was made till 1697, when Major Fitch with his family removed thither, digging the first cellar and erecting the first permanent habitation in what is now the township of Canterbury. With hundreds of farms, and many thousand acres of land at his disposal, he selected for his establishment and permanent residence "a neck of land" enclosed by a curve of the Quinebaug, below the river island Peagscomsuck, which gave its name to the settlement. At the time of this removal to the Quinebaug Country, Major Fitch was a little past middle age, and had been for many years one of the most prominent men in Connecticut. From early manhood he had been actively employed in civil and military affairs; helped re-establish colonial government after the revolution of 1689; was appointed assistant in 1690; sergeant-major of New London County in 1696; served as boundary commissioner and land revisor; led military expeditions,

manned forts, guarded the frontier and exercised jurisdiction over the Mohegans and all their lands and interests. The popularity of Major Fitch was now somewhat on the wane, his immense land operations excited public jealousy and involved him in controversy and litigation, so that a remonstrance was presented to the General Court, "by many of his Majesty's loyal and dutiful subjects," who could not see cause to acknowledge Captain James Fitch to be Lord Proprietor of the Colony.

In this remonstrance, it was asserted—

"That Captain Fitch had laid claim to our established inheritance by pretences of grants from Owaneco . . . had such a large liberty to spread his wings far and near that he might easily stretch Owaneco's wings over two or three counties more than his own to accommodate his own designs, seeing that Owaneco is a person of so flexible a temper that he will do anything for a bottle of rum . . . and is almost blind in drinking away his own and other men's lands in that sort of liquor. Thus, gentlemen, you may see on what easy terms Captain Fitch has procured the Wabbaquasset, Mohegan, Quinebaug and a great part of the Pequod countries from Owaneco, and hath already sold out vast tracts of our land to some now in England, Rhode Island, and some to privateers, as we have been informed. . . . Let any man give an example of any of the King's subjects, in Europe or America, since the times of William the Conqueror till to-day, that ever ingrostr so much land as Captain Fitch hath done in this Colony, which was before given and confirmed to other men under the great seal of England, so that we cannot but declare and protest against these sales as illegal, and pray the Court to pass an act condemning them. We cannot but declare against Captain Fitch, his being such a great land-pirate and selling so much of our land to strangers, and hope the General Court and our people will variously consider how pernicious a man Mr. Fitch is to the rising generation in this Colony, and what a scandal it is to this government and how gravaminous to many of the Queen's subjects, that a person that makes it his business to sell the free men's lands should any longer continue in office in this Colony."

This jealousy of Major Fitch's possessions and Indian influence was aggravated by his own willfulness and violence and his persistency in carrying out his own schemes without regard to means or consequences. Various mal-administration charges were alleged against him, and an irregular, if not illegal, entry of land in the town book of Norwich, in 1697, greatly injured his standing in his native town and, quite probably, led to his change of residence. So serious was the charge, that for three years succeeding he was dropped from the Assistant's office.

After the death of his first wife—a daughter of Captain John Mason—Major Fitch married Alice Bradford, widow of Rev. William Adams, of Dedham, and mother of Mrs. Whiting, of Windham. Nine sons and daughters accompanied him to Peagscomsuck, and soon the Indian "neck" became an attractive family seat. The social position of Major Fitch and his wide business relations, drew many people around him, and his plantation was at once recognized as a place of no small consequence; a rendezvous for land-traders, civil and military officials and hordes of idle Indians. Here Courts were held, military

expeditions organized and many thousand acres of land bartered away. It was the first, and long the only, settlement between Norwich and Woodstock, extending its hospitalities and accommodations to many a weary traveler. The expedition that marched to the relief of Woodstock in 1699 passed the night, both in going and returning, "at Major Fitch's farm in Peagscomsuck." A road was soon laid out from Windham to this noted establishment, and connecting with Greenwich Path, formed the great thoroughfare to Providence. Kent was the name given by the Major to his plantation, but its Indian appellation persistently adhered to it.

Other settlers soon followed Major Fitch. Samuel Adams, from Chelmsford; Elisha Paine, from Eastham; Obadiah and William Johnson, Samuel and Josiah Cleveland, from Woburn; Thomas Brooks, Rowland Jones and Robert Green, all settled west of the Quinebaug. To encourage these settlers, Owaneco, in 1698, made over to Major James Fitch, Josiah Cleveland and Jabez Utter, the land between the Quinebaug and Appaquake Rivers, extending eight and a half miles north of Norwich north line—except those lands formerly granted to Major Fitch, Solomon and Daniel Tracy and Richard Bushnell,—"in trust for y<sup>e</sup> inhabitants now dwelling in the plantation of Quinebaug, they bearing their proportion of charge, to wit: Thomas Brooks, Obadiah Johnson, Samuel Cleveland, Robert Green, Rowland Jones and Major Fitch. The above are on the west side of Quinebaug; the intention is to promote plantation work." This conveyance did not prevent Owaneco's selling the same land to *other* settlers at every opportunity. Indeed, some tracts were sold to three or four different purchasers by this "flexible" and unscrupulous chieftain. In 1699, Owaneco sold to Obadiah Johnson and Samuel Adams all the south part of the tract west of the Quinebaug not previously appropriated. Elisha Paine bought two thousand acres in the south of the tract from Major Fitch. Tixhall Ensworth, of Hartford, also settled on land bought of Fitch. Josiah Cleveland bought land at Wanungatuck, "both sides of Tadneck Hill," of Richard Bushnell; Solomon Tracy, Jun., took possession of the land owned by his father. In October, 1697, it was ordered by the General Court, "That the people inhabiting upon Quinebaug River shall be and belong to the county of New London." After the election of Fitz John Winthrop as governor of Connecticut, in 1698, his request for the confirmation of his Quinebaug lands received due consideration, and a committee was appointed with full power to find out and renew the bounds, but no immediate investigation was attempted. In May, 1699, the inhabitants east and west of Quinebaug River had become sufficiently numerous to present to the General Court the following petition:—

"Whereas, some thirty families are here and have made some settlement,

and although the place be of itself considerable for a good township there ought to be a regular, orderly settlement, and that we may have the privilege which belong to other towns, without which we cannot as we should serve God nor our country, we, therefore, pray for town privileges, and that two suitable persons be appointed to measure out ten miles square, and that we may have a name and brand and freedom from charges.

We also pray that the Court would appoint a committee of indifferent, uninterested persons to lay out allotments and to equalize such as have been in part laid out, for, without any reflection on the persons that have been already concerned, we humbly conceive it cannot be reasonable to suppose that a peaceable, honorable, speedy, righteous laying out of lots and divisions of lands and meadows can be by six brothers, who also pretend to, and would hold, near a sixth part of the plantation to themselves; whereas, it is well known that this place lyeth under many pretended claims besides our honorable Governor's claim, and by their own surveying, running near two miles for less than a hundred acres to lay out spots of meadow—such actions, so contrary to law, if not regulated, the place is spoiled; and, therefore, we humbly pray the Assembly to appoint Captain Wetherell, Mr. Pitkin and Mr. Ely to inquire into the legal proceedings, and inform the weak and feeble, that they may have a more speedy and peaceable settlement, so that we may have the worship of God among us—the which above all is to be desired and sought for, and have our rights defended to ourselves and heirs.

May 9, 1699.

#### EAST SIDE SETTLERS.

Isaac Shepard.  
Richard Pellet.  
Benjamin Rood.  
John Fellows.  
Samuel Shepard.

John Spalding.  
Edward Spalding.  
James Kingsbury.  
Thomas Pierce.  
Thomas Harris.

Matthias Button.  
Joseph Spalding.  
Jacob Warren.  
Nathaniel Jewell.  
Timothy Pierce.

#### WEST SETTLERS.

Robert Green.  
Richard Adams.

Samuel Cleveland.  
Josiah Cleveland.

Thomas Brooks.  
Obadiah Johnson.  
William Johnson."

About two-thirds of the inhabitants were represented in this petition. Major Fitch and his adherents could not be expected to sign a document which, indirectly, admitted the claim of the "honorable Governor." The "six brothers" referred to are probably the various Gallups, whose names are also withheld from the petition and whose previous land operations had excited so much ill-feeling. In spite of these omissions, the petition was most favorably considered, and the following "Acts of the Governor, Council and Representatives, granted, upon the motion of the Governor, and petition of y<sup>e</sup> people of Quinebaug:"

"Impr. That they shall have the powers and privileges of a township, provided it doth not prejudice any particular person's property.

2. That their bounds shall be as exprest by the Governor's Honor, viz.: Ten miles east and west and eight miles north and south, abutting southerly on Preston and Norwich bounds and westerly on Windham bounds, provided it doth not prejudice any former grant of townships.

3. That the Governor's Honor shall give the plantation a name, and also appoint a horse brand for the use of the inhabitants.

4. That they shall have three years exemption from paying rates to the country.

5. That Captain Daniel Wetherell. Mr. William Pitkin and Captain William Ely, they or any two of them, shall be a committee to lay out the bounds of the town and to make return thereof to this Court in October next."



## XVII.

## AGREEMENTS. QUINEBAUG LAND INVESTIGATION.

ON May 31, 1699, the inhabitants of the Quinebaug Plantation met to organize town government. James Deane was chosen town-clerk; Jacob Warren, Joseph Spalding, Stephen Hall, William Johnson and Samuel Adams were chosen selectmen; John Fellows, constable; Thomas Williams, surveyor. Though many things were needful for the health and orderly settlement of the new town, the first care was to secure a minister. For several years the Quinebaug settlers had been deprived of religious privileges, but now their township was confirmed to them and a young minister had been already procured in whom they were all united. Their first vote after electing town officers was, "To give the Rev. Mr. Coit a call for one quarter of a year, for ten pounds. Stephen Hall, Nathaniel Jewell, Joseph Spalding and Thomas Williams to go and treat with him, receive his answer and return it to the town." Rev. Joseph Coit—the son of Deacon Joseph Coit, of New London—was graduated from Harvard College in 1697, and, after preaching on probation a few months in Norwich, was invited to settle there, but expressly declared his disagreement from Norwich church, presuming to "set up his own opinion in opposition to the Synod Book and a cloud of witnesses." To a young man of such independent habits of thought the liberty of a new plantation was doubtless attractive, and Mr. Coit at once accepted the invitation to Quinebaug. Religious services were held during the summer, alternating from the east to the west side of the Quinebaug. September 6, the town voted, "That we should still Endeavour to have the gospel preached among us and still Endeavour to get the Rev. Mr. Coit to remain another quarter. As to rate, first see by an Endeavour what those that are in our improvement and pretend to an interest in our plantation are willing to contribute towards carrying on the public worship of God in this Plantation, and then to make the rate accordingly upon allotments as have bin of-sat."

Some difficulty was found in collecting this rate. Some of the inhabitants of this somewhat lawless community were indifferent about religious worship, while others—especially the Massachusetts settlers—were deeply anxious to establish religious institutions and settle their plantation upon a sound Christian basis. A meeting of the inhabitants was accordingly held, November 13, 1699, and the following agreement adopted:—

"Whereas, we, the inhabitants living on the east and west sides of Quinabogus River, did, last May, petition the General Court of this Colony that we

might be, according to law, incorporate and have town powers and privileges granted to us, the which the General Court, were pleased to grant unto us, and now that we might rightly and truly improve the loyal and reasonable privileges granted to us, so that it may be for the honor and glory of the Lord our God and for the good and comfort of us and our children's children—we, the subscribers, do by these presents formerly oblige ourselves, our heirs, executors, administrators and assigns, to maintain an able, faithful, orthodox gospel minister, so as that the sure worship of God may be at all times upheld and maintained amongst us; and as to the way of raising this and all other just, needful and necessary town charges, that it be done justly and equally according to each one's just proportion, in such a way and manner as the major part of us, the subscribers agree on, or according to the law of the Colony—always provided that a suitable and honorable maintenance be taken care of for the minister.


We do agree that a suitable allotment and accommodations be laid out for the minister that God, in his holy providence, shall settle among us; that there shall be an allotment or accommodations laid out in some suitable place to be and remain for the minister for ever.

Though duty to God and the wholesome laws of the Colony would oblige to a thorough care in the education of our children, yet it being found by experience that there is some too great remissness in parents and others, and also difficulty in sending so remote one from another, but that we might be truly endeavoring to do in this matter as God shall enable; we do agree that the townsmen do yearly take special care in this matter.

In testimony of the premises, witness our hands, November 13, 1699.

James Fitch.	Thomas Brooks.	Samuel Adams.
Stephen Hall,	Benjamin Rood.	Tixhall Ensworth.
Nathaniel Jewell.	James Deane.	Isaac Shepard.
Thomas Williams.	Daniel Woodward.	Samuel Shepard.
Jacob Warren.	Richard Adams.	John Fellows.
John Spalding.	William Marsh.	John Smith.
Joseph Spalding.	Joshua Whitney.	Edward Baldwin.
Thomas Stevens.	William Johnson.	Joseph Parkhurst.
William Douglas.	Benj. Spalding.	John Deane.
Thomas Pierce.	James Kingsbury.	Samuel Howe.
Henry Walbridge.	Samuel Cleveland.	Peter Crary."
Robert Green.	Obadiah Johnson.	
Matthias Button.	Josiah Cleveland.	

Twelve of these thirty-eight subscribers resided west, the remainder east, of the Quinebaug. Sixteen signed their names; the others affixed a mark. The Gallups, Benjamin Palmer, Bump and Welch, who did not sign the agreement, brought up the number of male inhabitants to about forty-five. Jacob Warren was chosen rate collector for the east side of the town; Richard Adams for the west. January 29, 1700, the committee were again authorized to treat with Mr. Coit, offering him twelve pounds a quarter for three-quarters of a year. Mr. Coit was not inclined to engage for three quarters as things were circumstanced but might abide one quarter for twelve pounds—two-thirds in silver money; one-third in provision pay. Attempts were made to bring the town into better circumstances and more regular order. At a town-meeting, February 2, 1700, "at the house of Isaac Shepard's present abroad," it was voted, "To accept the General Court's grant of May, 1699, and expect benefit by virtue of the same, and send for the committee to "run the town bounds," and the towns-men were enjoined to take timely care to send for the appointed committee. The partial

laying out of the town was probably accomplished in course of the year. In October, it was announced, that as the Assembly had left it to the Governor to give name to the new plantation at Quinebaug—"his honor hath named the town Plainfield, and the horse brand he hath appointed to be a triangle, in this forme, , and hath given order that record be made accordingly." Captain Wetherell, Captain John Hamin, Mr. William Pitkin and Captain Ely were again appointed a committee, to find out and renew the bounds of the tract purchased by Winthrop at Quinebaug, "the committee to take the best information they can get to guide them in their work, either of indifferent Indians or of any other persons, and to give notice to those that border upon the land before they enter upon the work."

Owing to the unseasonableness of the weather, this investigation was delayed till the following spring, during which interval nothing was accomplished for the further settlement of the township. Indeed, nothing could be done till land titles were made valid. A number of inhabitants, viz.: Thomas Williams, Benjamin and Joseph Spalding and William Johnson, all of Peagscomsuck, purchased of Owaneco for six pounds current money—the right to all the land in this section east of the Quinebaug, "except what was already sold and paid for, in trust for those inhabitants of the plantation of Quinebaug, east of the river, who were willing to bear the charge for the promoting of a plantation,"—but no possession could be taken till Winthrops' claim was settled. Mr. Coit was still loth to engage to remain for any certain time but continued to preach quarter after quarter, and desired the town "to provide him as convenient a place as may be for his abode, and defray the charge of it." As so large a proportion of the inhabitants were settled east of the Quinebaug, "it was thought reasonable and also voted to have the service on the Sabbath two-thirds of the time upon the east and one-third upon the west side."

In May, 1701, the committee previously appointed, with the addition of Captain Matthew Allen and Sergeant Caleb Stanley, were again empowered to find out and renew the bounds of the Winthrop land purchase, giving "at least three days warning to Norwich people, or to such of them as are proprietors or claim land adjacent, or to Mr. Tracey only—always provided that what the committee shall do in the premises shall not confirm or invalidate the title of any Indian sachem, and that the work be done at the charge of the Honored Governor, John Winthrop, and Wait Winthrop."

Having summoned the requisite guides and witnesses and given due notice to all interested parties, the appointed gentlemen met at "Plainfield, *alias* Quinebaug or Peagscomsuck, May 21, 1701—to find out

and renew the bounds of the land purchased by John Winthrop of Allumps and Aguntus, *alias* Hyems, and Masshaushowit." It was an investigation of great interest and importance, involving the title to a large tract of land and the present and future peace and well-being of many individuals and families. A large concourse of people had gathered at the New Plantation—Major General Wait Winthrop, from New London, with counsellors and followers; Judge Tracy, Lieutenant Leffingwell, Richard Bushnell and other Norwich proprietors, together with Major Fitch and all the Quinebaug inhabitants from both sides of the river were present at this memorable meeting. Owaneco was there in royal state, with a great company of his Mohegans. There, too, were the Quinebaugs, the original proprietors of the disputed territory, still numbering some hundreds; and representatives of the Nipmucks, Pequots, Shetuckets and Narragansets. The place of meeting is not specified, but the preliminary examination was probably held at the Peagscomsuck establishment. The testimony of various Indians as to the reputed bounds of the Quinebaug lands was first taken—Joseph Morgan and John Gallup serving as interpreters. The presence of Owaneco, drunken and degraded as he was, so terrified the craven Quinebaugs that they were obliged to be examined apart. Having taken this testimony, the committee set out, with guides, divers Plainfield inhabitants and a long train of Indians, to search for the bounds thus described to them. They went first "to Pautucket, a place mentioned in Hyems' deed, which is a great Falls in Quinebaug River; where there cometh in on the east side another river [the Assawaga], and there on a hill [Acquiunk] thirty or forty rods southeast from the Falls, the said Indians showed them where was Hyems, his fort, in which they said were four cellars or great holes in the ground, and near thereto was a considerable quantity of ground that had formerly been planted, which the Indians told them was the planting ground mentioned in Hyems' deed—and from this planting ground they traveled by the compass on the point southeast one mile into the wilderness, where, being on the top of a high hill, the Indians showed them other places, and then they set down a compass" and determined that "a right line drawn from this point, Acquidaneck, to Uhquanchaug, on the extreme western limit, crossing the Quinebaug at the said Pautucket or Great Falls—should be the northern boundary of Governor Winthrop's tract."

The next day "they went to the Little Falls, called by the Indians Lowontuxit, about three miles south of Major Fitch's house," which place they adjudged to be the south bounds of the purchase, and thence they traveled east, west and north, piloted by the Indians, "to hills,



meadows, swamps, plains, rivers and brooks," identifying the various bounds designated by the witnesses, and in traveling on the west side of the Quinebaug tract northwest and north from place to place, "went in or near to an old footpath made by the Nipmuck Indians traveling to Shetucket."

Four days were spent by the committee in these investigations and explorations. The boundaries were carefully renewed; a plot of the land was made and presented to the General Court with a full report of all their proceedings. Winthrop's tract was found to contain twelve or thirteen miles square, and all the lands claimed by Major Fitch and John Tracy and almost all the land comprised in the town of Plainfield, with houses and buildings thereon, were included within it, and "said Indians did testify that Hyems was the sachem of all those lands comprised within the boundaries." The General Court received this return of their doings and allowed "a record thereof as their return and report," and there the matter rested. No attempt was made to settle the question of ownership, and both parties were left to sell land and seize it at pleasure.

Finding that all attempts to procure a decision of the land controversy were fruitless, the Plainfield inhabitants resolved to assume the jurisdiction of their territory, and make the best settlement that was possible under the circumstances. Accordingly, about two weeks after the meeting of the Quinebaug Land Committee, and doubtless with the advice of some of the eminent gentlemen present on that occasion, a committee of the oldest and most respected inhabitants was appointed, "to consider all that may tend to the good welfare of this town." James Deane, William Marsh, Joseph Spalding, Nathaniel Jewell, Thomas Williams, William and Obadiah Johnson, Samuel Adams, Samuel and Josiah Cleveland were selected for this important service. They found many things needful for peace and good order. The previous difficulties and uncertainties had prevented any attempt at public improvements. Instead of having, like other towns, lands reserved for public uses, the Plainfield settlers had not even been sure of their own homesteads. They had neither roads, bridges, mills, schools; meeting-house or record-book, and even the arrangement for religious services had not been carried out faithfully. The Quinebaug was only fordable at low water and was at times impassable; Mr. Coit and a majority of his hearers lived on the east side, and the preaching on the west side had been often omitted. "The committee appointed to settle all these things," considered them carefully and, June 13, 1701, brought in the subjoined report:—

"I. Whereas, there has been difficulty as to our meeting together upon Sabbath days to attend upon the public worship of God by reason of difficulty

in crossing over Quinebogus River and no place as yet stated by y<sup>e</sup> town to meet in, through consideration of which it has been thought reasonable and also voted to meet one-third of the time upon the west side, and things falling out so, as there has been too much remissness in meeting on west side and also some difficulty arising in raising y<sup>e</sup> minister's rate and arrears—the town has seen cause to choose a committee to consider the premises and prepare things suitable to exhibit, which agrees that the lost time shall be made up by meeting two days on the west side and one day on the east, and then for the time following to meet according to the property that each side shall be rated.

II. That there shall be sixty inhabitants with allotments and those are the inhabitants to be equally privileged which have subscribed to the Articles of Agreement, and shall subscribe by the consent of the major part of the inhabitants that shall vote.

III. That the town shall procure a suitable book.

IV. There shall be three men chosen to lay out lots to all the legal and listed inhabitants—twenty acres a lot and thirty acres for addition.

V. All town rates are to be levied upon polls and stocks as they are valued in law.

VI. The town gives notice that all such as lay claim to land in this town that there will be notice given to as many claimers as may be, that they may come to such a meeting or meetings as the town may appoint, these to clear up their rights to such as the town shall make choice of."

This report was accepted and, in addition, it was voted :—

"That all such as do expect to have a lot and addition laid out, shall timely present the model of the lot and where it is he desires it, and give it in writing to the surveyor;" also, "That Major Fitch and Thomas Williams should take the first opportunity to agree with Preston about dividend line."

Under these new arrangements, the town made some progress in settlement, though some time passed before the allotments were laid out and distributed. Public worship was held as agreed, two Sundays on the west of the Quinebaug to one on the east, till the close of the year. Mr. Coit was invited to remain another year for twenty pounds in money and thirty pounds in grain—one-third of it to be rye; Indian corn to be valued at "two shillings a bushel, rye at three, wheat at four." Town meetings were held alternately east and west of the Quinebaug, at Isaac Shepard's and Obadiah Johnson's. In 1702, a pound was built on each side of the river; Nathaniel Jewell the east and Samuel Adams the west pound-keeper. Thomas Williams, Edward Spalding and John Fellows were east-side surveyors; Richard Adams and Thomas Brooks, west-side. Samuel Cleveland and Joshua Whitney were collectors. Thomas Williams was selected by the town to keep a house of public entertainment on the east, and Obadiah Johnson on the west, of the Quinebaug. John Fellows, John Smith and John Gallup had inspection of the Cedar Swamp, and when any timber was appropriated illegally were directed to seize it and prosecute the matter.

Major Fitch and other leading citizens were now making efforts to provide a suitable place for public worship, and, although no town vote had been taken, in May, 1702, they applied to the General Court, praying for the appointment of three indifferent persons at the cost of

the petitioners, "to view and give advice where to set their meeting-house as may be most suitable for the whole town, and in hopes such a means may prevent future trouble." Nathaniel Chesborough, John Richards and Jonathan Crane were accordingly appointed, who selected a site on Black Hill, near a common and convenient crossing-place of the Quinebaug, as one that would best accommodate the inhabitants on both sides of the river. A meeting-house frame was here set up and covered during the summer, and temporary arrangements made for its occupancy, so that, in January, 1703, the town voted, "That the house we have lately met in to attend upon the public worship of God shall be the meeting house for the town's use, and the town doth accept it as built and the account of the charge of it as given to them, and that it shall be equally apportioned as to what is past about building and also as to what charge may be hereafter." Thus Plainfield, with all her difficulties and embarrassments, was six months in advance of her prosperous neighbor, Windham, in taking possession of her first meeting-house.

## XVIII.

### DIVISION OF TOWNSHIP. DISTRIBUTION OF LAND. IRRUPTION FROM NORWICH.

**A**LTHOUGH so much pains had been taken to select a meeting-house site for the accommodation of the whole township, only one side made use of it, and before the town had voted its acceptance it had decided upon a permanent division of territory. The troublesome "Quinebogus" was the chief cause of this final separation. Its weekly transit was too difficult and dangerous to be endured, though other considerations were not without weight and influence. The controversy between the Winthrops and Major Fitch involved the inhabitants in quarrels and lawsuits. The eastern settlers favored the Winthrops; the western generally adhered to Major Fitch and his interests. The Major was arbitrary and unreasonable, and, when excited by opposition, violent and unscrupulous, as when "John Fellows, Ebenezer Harris and John Gallup had quietly entered upon a certain parcel of land in the plantation of Plainfield and had cleared and subdued about eight acres and had a crop of English grain growing thereupon nigh to the harvest, the said Major Fitch under a pretence of proceeding against them in a judicial way for forcible entry, did to the extreme wrong and injury of the complainants force them off from the

said land, not suffering them to inne the crop that was upon it, and also arresting and imprisoning them and extorting a considerable sum of money from them for their freedom." On complaint being made to the General Court of this treatment, it was declared by that body, "that Major Fitch had not attended any due methods of law in his proceedings, that the parties injured had not been found guilty of any matter of misdemeanor that might expose them to suffering of imprisonment or loss of goods, that the method of proceeding against them had been very erroneous and illegal and that Major Fitch ought to make good to them whatever loss they had sustained."

After finding themselves in possession of a house of worship in the autumn of 1702, the inhabitants of Plainfield invited the Reverends James Noyes, Gurdon Saltonstall and Salmon Treat, to advise with them respecting the call of a minister. These gentlemen came up to Plainfield and after considering the disturbed condition of affairs, the various quarrels that were pending and the difficulty of crossing the formidable Quinebaug in winter and high water, advised the people to follow the natural division of the territory and organize as two distinct societies or townships. The suggestion met with immediate favor and was hastily adopted by those present, the reverend gentlemen themselves drawing up articles of separation, as follows :—

"We agree that the Quinebaug shall be the division to the centre of Peagscomsuck Island and from the centre of that island [a line] due east, a quarter of a mile—thence a line run straight to the south bounds of town a mile eastward from Quinebaug River, and in whichever part the great cedar swamp shall fall, the inhabitants on both sides shall have liberty to use the timber. Both sides paying for the ministry, only the west side not to bear any part of the charge for the meeting-house now built on the east side—the inhabitants of the west side to procure a minister for themselves as soon as the lines are run. East side joining with them in application to the General Court for the grant of a separate township, on west side.

## EAST SIDE SETTLERS.

James Dean.	Joseph Spalding.	Thomas Stevens, Jr.
Thomas Williams.	Benjamin Spalding.	Jacob Warren.
William Johnson.	Edward Spalding.	Stephen Hall.
William Marsh.	James Welch.	Joshua Whitney.
John Fellows.	Phillip Bump.	John Smith.
Benjamin Clark.	Matthias Button.	William Douglas.
Edward Yeomans.	Thomas Pierce.	Benjamin Palmer.
John Spalding.	Thomas Stevens, Sen.	Nathaniel Jewell.

## WEST SIDE SETTLERS.

James Fitch.	Josiah Cleveland.	Benjamin Rood.
Samuel Cleveland.	Elisha Paine.	Isaac Cleveland.
Obadiah Johnson.	Richard Adams.	
Robert Green.	Thomas Brooks.	

## WITNESSES.

James Noyes.	G. Saltonstall.	Salmon Treat.
		Dec. 24, 1702."

This agreement so suddenly arranged was faithfully carried out as the most satisfactory solution of perplexities and difficulties. Thomas



Williams was selected as "the man to act in behalf of inhabitants of the east side in running the dividend line to be the bounds between the inhabitants of east and west sides—line to be perfected by March ensuing." With the prospect of a permanent settlement now brightening, the town appointed a committee, Jan. 21, 1703, "to treat with Mr. Coit for his encouragement to settle here and be the constant minister," and offered him "a lot over Moosup's River and £80, to carry on his building, £40 a year and more when able." Mr. Coit accepted the lot over Moosup, "provided it be on any good ways that are passable"—and also the £80 to carry on his building, "provided he can procure a settlement elsewhere that may suit him, which if he can't and do stay here, the town must seek some other way; also the £40 salary, and desires some of it shall be in money."

In pursuance of the agreement of the preceding December, May 13, 1703, the following petition was presented to the General Court:—

"The inhabitants of the west of Plainfield having been in a long labarynth of difficulties by reason of a tedious river that is between us and them and we have modeled and begun to get timber for our meeting-house and purchased and set out a lot for our minister and ask to be confirmed as a town.

William Johnson.  
Obadiah Johnson.

Elisha Paine.  
Samuel Cleveland.

James Deane.  
Thomas Williams."

In response to this and a petition from Plainfield, that a dividing line might be stated between the east and west side inhabitants, the division was allowed—but fearing that the line proposed would prove very prejudicial to the field on the east side—the Assembly ordered, "That the river should be the dividing line from the north to the south bound of the town," and also, "That the inhabitants of the west side should pay towards the ministry in proportion to their estates till they had an orthodox and approved minister orderly settled amongst them. Freedom from payment of country rates was also granted for two years. This change of boundary line, cutting off from the western inhabitants their share of the valued cornfields, excited much dissatisfaction and fresh remonstrance, and in October the Court allowed the line agreed upon by the inhabitants to be the dividing line of the town and the inhabitants on the west side of the river to have the privileges of a township—its name to be Canterbury.

This separation being effected, Plainfield was enabled to give Mr. Coit a formal call and finish its meeting-house. This edifice when accepted was but a rude frame with temporary floor and seats. October 29, 1703, a committee was appointed, "To take care for the better seating of the meeting-house at y<sup>e</sup> town's charge." In December, it was voted, "To have the meeting-house floored and a body of seats and a pulpit made, all to be done decently and with as much speed as may be, the ceiling to extend at present only to the girths; the previous

committee, William Johnson, Joseph Spalding and Benjamin Palmer, to get this work done at the town's charge." In addition to what had been previously offered Mr. Coit, he was now promised equal privileges with other land-owners in the purchase made of Owaneco for the benefit of the inhabitants. A committee was appointed, "to see the several town acks that are in the clerk's custody and take care that such as they think fit are entered in a suitable book and the rest of them presented to the town as there might be occasion." The various town acts which up to this date had been kept on scattered bits of paper, were now regularly arranged and recorded.

The division of Plainfield territory into equal and regular allotments and its distribution among such inhabitants as fulfilled the required conditions were accomplished in 1704; the recipients throwing up their previous purchases into the common stock and receiving each an allotment with promise of future divisions. Thomas Pierce, John Fellows and Benjamin Palmer were a committee to lay out the first allotments. A broad strip of land adjoining the Quinebaug, extending from the north side of Moosup's River to the cedar swamps—the great corn-valley of Plainfield—was reserved as a General Field for the use of all the inhabitants. William Marsh, Joshua Whitney and John Smith were appointed to proportion the enclosing fence to the several proprietors. Forty hundred-acre lots were ordered to be laid out east of Egunk Brook "and if there be not sufficient land there sat down, the remainder to be laid north side of Moosup's River" or "west of the Flat Rock if it be needful."

"February 28, 1704. We, the under-written, petition the town of Plainfield, that we may have the grant of our allotments and additions equally privileged, each with other from the town. Samuel Shepard, John Smith, Benjamin Smith, John Fellows, Ebenezer Harris, William Douglas, Thomas Stevens, Sen., Thomas Pierce, James Kingsbury, Edward Yeomans, Joshua Whitney, Stephen Hall, John Spalding, Edward do., Benjamin Palmer, Nathaniel Jewell, Thomas Stevens, Jr., Matthias Button, Jacob Warren, Timothy Pierce, Joseph Parkhurst, Thomas Williams, James Deane, Joseph Spalding."

The same day the subscribers by virtue of the Court's grant had their lots and additions granted to be "equally privileged."

To these twenty-four proprietors others were soon added. A number of the inhabitants who were at first reluctant to resign their lands, afterwards came into the arrangement, though Isaac Shepard and two or three others never relinquished their individual ownership. Each family retained its original homestead and care was taken to accommodate all with accessible allotments. A lot was laid out to William Douglas "at the brook west of his house running into Mill Brook—the remainder of his purchase being yielded up to the general use of the town." James Deane gave to the use of the town his land east-side of Mill Brook, "hoping that it might tend to the speedy and

quiet settlement of the town, though much to his loss." Ephraim Wheeler threw up his purchased land, retaining the lot north of Moosup's River, on which he was settled. William Gallup was allowed a lot, "provided he bring his family to it in some reasonable time and there settle his family;" Peter Crery, also, "provided he do speedily settle his family upon it;" John Gallup, Jr., was granted "the lot he now lives on;" John Gallup, Sen., "a lot adjoining his son's." Matthias Button was allowed to have his hundred acres in two parts, one of them to be between his house lot and Moosup's River, "so that it be not any hindrance to the setting up a corn mill on said river." Samuel Howe, John Deane and other new inhabitants were each granted the privilege of an allotment, by paying three pounds in money into the town treasury.

This division being distributed, the town voted, August 27, "That all the intervals adjoining to the north end of the intervals called Judge Tracy's and so up Quinebaug River to Moosup's and so up Moosup's to the place called The Seven Wonders, and so up both sides Moosup's to the General Field fence, shall be laid out into four-acre divisions so far as it will go and to be to the upper end inhabitants, and the south inhabitants to have as much laid out elsewhere—Thomas Stevens, Sen., John Smith and Edward Yeomans, committee." This division was laid out and drawn by lot by forty proprietors, October 19, 1704. The remarkable locality designated "The Seven Wonders" has not been identified. It was assigned to William Marsh and described as near Moosup Round Hill and the lower fordway of Moosup's River, not far from "a birch swamp in a hollow, bound round with hills." To record these various allotments and divisions and other town proceedings, James Deane, the faithful town-clerk, was "engaged to provide three suitable books for the town and to make suitable alphabets to them—one book to record town acts, one for births, marriages and deaths, and one to record the laws, and also to make an alphabet for the present book." For this work, which was performed with great care and accuracy, Mr. Deane was excused from paying anything towards the meeting-house.

The peace and tranquillity inaugurated by the division of the town and its orderly laying out were soon broken. An over-measurement of the Tracy land was detected, by which some forty acres were wrongly appropriated, which the town at once seized and made over to Jeremy and other Indians, who raised a fine crop of corn upon it. The Tracy heirs protested against this seizure and signified their determination to take possession of the corn when it was ready for harvest. Early in September a rumor reached Plainfield that the Norwich people were coming up to clear the Indian corn field. As it was a time of Indian

alarm and disturbance, and very necessary to avoid any occasion of complaint and ill-feelings, Smith, the constable, was ordered by the town authorities to gather the corn at once and deliver it to the selectmen for the use and improvement of the Indians. Benjamin Palmer and Ebenezer Harris were employed to assist the constable and had gathered the corn into heaps ready to be carried away, when up rode a number of gay young gentlemen from Norwich—Joseph Tracy, John Waterman, William and Jabez Hide, Albert Huntington, Caleb Bushnell and others—all in high spirits and eager for affray, who at once seized the corn and began loading it into the wagons, and in reply to the constable's warning, declared that they *would* have it. The constable then in her Majesty's name required them to desist, but they went on gathering up the corn and when cited to appear before Major Fitch, declared "That if Major Fitch should send as many warrants as there were straws in the stubble they would take no notice of them." Constable Smith then rode away to report proceedings at head-quarters, and returned with a special writ of assistance and carried the young gentlemen before the Honorable Major, who ordered the constable to take them into custody and take them before the Governor and Council, impressing what men and horses were needed for this service. Smith with Palmer and Harris accordingly mounted their horses and rode off with the prisoners, but long before they reached Norwich the young men made their escape and galloped away. The officers pursued them to James Bushnell's tavern, where some of them "had brought up," when the constable reproved them for their riotous conduct and again summoned them to attend upon the Governor, "but they refused, mounted their horses," saucily bade the officers "good night," and ran away.

This affair caused Plainfield much trouble, expense and inconvenience. Smith was arrested next day, on a charge of "illegal seizing and delivering to Benjamin Palmer, townsman, a certain parcel of Indian corn, by virtue of an unlawful writ," and after several trials before various courts was sentenced to pay £18 and costs. The General Court, upon petition of the defendant, reversed this decision, May, 1706, remitted the execution of judgment, and ordered that both parties should "bear each the charges they have expended."

The Indian war of 1704 subjected Plainfield to stringent restrictions and new outlays. With other frontier towns it was "not to be deserted;" its inhabitants were forbidden to leave the place; compelled to support guard-houses and scouts, and provide equipments and ammunition. A train-band company was formed in May, with Thomas Williams for ensign, Samuel Howe for sergeant. Guards were stationed about the meeting-house on Sunday and watch-houses maintained in



exposed parts of the town. Great pains were taken to propitiate the favor of the Quinebaugs, who continued as ever peaceable and friendly, notwithstanding the hazard and danger incurred when their corn was taken away from them and "the dangerous consequences that then threatened the whole country by provoking the natives to desert the place and fall off to the enemy."

With all these various affairs the settlement of the minister was not neglected. Finding in April, 1704, that the committee chosen to complete the meeting-house had not proceeded in that work, "ensign Williams, Joseph Spalding and Jacob Warren were directed to carry on the same and get what debts were due the town and improve for the same." October 19, Sergeant Howe with Williams and Spalding were chosen "to order the settlement of the pulpit and where a pew shall be made and the manner of it, and also for ordering a body of seats and how they shall be made and settled." It was also voted, "To invite the Reverend Messrs. Noyes, Saltonstall and Treat to be helpful to the town in carrying on a day of humiliation and prayer," preparatory to the formation of the church and ordination of the minister. This having been accomplished on a day appointed by Mr. Noyes and the "pulpit settled on the south side of the meeting-house," the town voted December 25, 1704, "That next Wednesday-com-seven—night be appointed for ordination," and early in January, 1705, a church was gathered in Plainfield and Mr. Coit ordained as its minister. No record is preserved of church organization or covenant. Ten males constituted its original membership. Its first deacons were Jacob Warren and William Douglas.

## XIX.

### QUINEBAUG LAND SETTLEMENT. VARIOUS IMPROVEMENTS.

WITH land laid out, a church, minister and meeting-house, Plainfield was far from being settled. The loss of her western territory and the unsettled condition of her various bounds gave her great uneasiness. The original layers-out of the town had failed to complete their work, and none of its boundaries were satisfactorily determined. Though she had freely and voluntarily relinquished to Canterbury the valley south of Peagscomsuck Island, she now fell back from her agreement, and insisted upon the first grant of the General Court, making the Quinebaug the boundary between the towns. Preston encroached much farther on the south than to a certain red oak tree, which should have sufficed her. To make up these

losses on the south and west, there was still vacant territory on the north and east that might be annexed to her, and to secure this became one of the chief objects of the town. April 27, 1704, being "sensible that they were in great need of enlargement, partly by Preston extending too far north and Canterbury coming upon us on the west side," the town voted to petition for enlargement—"William Marsh to go with petition and discourse with the honored governor as to enlargement and do with him as far as he can, as he may find it needful on y<sup>e</sup> town's behalf." Major Fitch was desired "to join with them concerning Preston as upon choice he did formerly with Thomas Williams." As the result of this action, the General Court, May 10, 1705, received the following petition:—

"Whereas, the honorable Court has been pleased to permit y<sup>e</sup> inhabitants east of the Quinebaug to be distinct and a town by ourselves, the breadth whereof at the south end doth not exceed six miles east from said Quinebang, if said river be continued as our west border, which we do not doubt seeing y<sup>e</sup> honorable Court has been pleased so to state it, in May, this time two years past, for we do look upon it, y<sup>t</sup> y<sup>e</sup> grants of our Hon. Court are like y<sup>e</sup> laws of the Medes and Persians, unalterable, and we dare not entertain such diminutive thoughts of our Honorable Rulers, y<sup>t</sup> they will act like children to grant a thing one Court and y<sup>n</sup> to take it away y<sup>e</sup> next (if they were able). And as for the breadth of our town at the north end it doth not exceed two and three-quarter miles, which we verily persuade ourselves this Hon. Court will not determine a sufficiency for us, whereby we may be able to bear a part to all public charges which will be needful, especially, inasmuch as it is with the Hon. Court to grant us a further enlargement without any real prejudice to any grant or plantation y<sup>t</sup> already is or may hereafter be granted; therefore beg you to grant y<sup>t</sup> our bounds may extend east to y<sup>e</sup> dividing line between Rhode Island and y<sup>s</sup> Colony, which is esteemed three miles or less from our present east bounds, and but a small part of it good for improvement, generally a barren pine land; also, pray to be enlarged three miles north, and then hope, by the blessing of God, as we are always willing so we shall be able, to maintain public charges in church and commonwealth—but if the Court think our request too much, though we are fully satisfied they would not if acquainted with our circumstances, we will leave it to your Honors to grant what they make think convenient, so as to maintain necessary charges as becomes Christians, and humbly pray that bounds east and north may be settled according to law, and Preston bounds likewise settled and bounds next to river further confirmed, and oblige your poor petitioners—

Stephen Hall.  
James Deane.

Nathaniel Jewell.  
Benjamin Palmer.  
William Marsh."

No action is reported upon this petition, nor upon another the following year asking for a new survey of the Preston bound.

While thus negotiating for enlargement, the town continued her distribution of present possessions. In February, 1705, a committee was appointed "to finish the laying out the divisions of meadows—*i. e.*, five and one-fourth acres to each inhabitant, and those that have not had their part to make their pitch and present it to the committee." It was also voted, "That all the land in Plainfield without the General Field to be laid out into five equal parts—Stephen Hall, Joshua Whitney, John Smith, William Marsh and Joseph Parkhurst a committee to do

it." A committee was also chosen to lay out leading ways into the General Field and a way to Canterbury. A mill had been some time in operation on Mill Brook, and a cart-bridge over it, and now the highway leading to it was turned eastward "to miss the two flows and with as much conveniency as may be, lead to the north part of Plainfield." A highway, six rods wide, was laid out from Preston line to the extent of the north bounds of the town, with two crossings at Moosup's River for public convenience. Connecting with this road was a highway through the General Field, between John Spalding's and Thomas Pierce's, and "so over the brook on the west side of Moosup's Hill to Moosup's River and so down the river." A corn-mill, set up on this river by Isaac Wheeler, in 1705 or 1706, making it needful for the town to have a common way thither, "Deacon Warren was appointed to act in that affair; where it may be most beneficial and convenient for the town and least prejudicial to any particular person." A road was laid out by the inhabitants of Moosup for their own convenience, from the north bound of the town to this mill, "beginning north side of Joseph Parkhurst's house, and thence by trees marked to the east of Isaac Shepard's house, and so east by Sergeant Howe's house, through Isaac and Ephraim Wheeler's lot to Moosup's River." The proper care and culture of the public cornfield called for frequent enactments, and in April, 1706, the town voted, "That there shall no cows, cattle or horses be suffered to go in the General Field, at liberty, from the first of April to the fourth of October, upon the penalty of six-pence a head, and if any cattle go upon the grain, the owners to pay five-pence per head to the owners of the grain as they shall be found in."

As the title to the lands of Plainfield was still unsettled and fresh law-suits and contentions constantly arising, another attempt was made in 1706, to settle the unhappy differences between the Honorable Governor and Major James Fitch, and six competent gentlemen were commissioned by the General Court to repair to the place of difference and there to inform themselves of the true state of that matter, mediate between the parties and endeavor an amicable compromise; with sufficient power to search records and examine evidences—while all actions at law depending between the parties were ordered to be suspended till after this investigation, when it was hoped that the cause of these actions and suits and of all their troubles and vexations would be brought to a final issue.

In accordance with these instructions, the appointed commissioners—Joseph Curtis, Esq., Rev. James Noyes, Timothy Woodbridge, Captain Abraham Fowler and Captain Matthew Allen proceeded carefully to investigate the Quinebaug land claims, examining the grants and the

bounds therein specified, and taking testimony from Quinebaugs, Mohegans, Narragansets, Pequots and Nipmucks—the aged John Acquitamog, of Woodstock, testifying that he was present at the time of Winthrop's purchase, and saw the trucking-cloth, red cotton, wampum, tobacco-pipes, &c., given by the Governor to Aguntus in payment. The commissioners adjudged that Hyems' deed to Winthrop was defective. “(1.) That it is without any valuable consideration. (2.) With respect unto the uncertain quantity of land therein conveyed, having but one *certain* boundary, Pawtucket, and one *probable* bound, a fort on Egunk Hill.” They found that the General Court had allowed the Governor's purchase, which had its weight; but they also found that Uncas's east bounds, as settled by the General Court's committee, take in the greatest part of the Quinebaug Country and runs to the aforesaid Falls,” or Pawtucket, and that the Court had granted leave to dispose of it to Owaneco, and had confirmed his sales of land to Major Fitch and others. With what now appears the vital point of the whole controversy—the right of either Hyems or Uncas to hold or convey the land—the commissioners had no concern, and probably, as at the previous investigation, it was provided that what was done by them “should not confirme or invalidate the title of any Indian sachem.”

Having examined all facts that came within their instructions, the commissioners next endeavored to effect the “amicable compromise,” and easily persuaded Governor Winthrop and his brother, who must have seen that their claim was not legally tenable, to renounce their right to the remaining lands at the Quinebaug to the Government of Connecticut, upon condition of receiving each a thousand acres, one in the north part of Plainfield, and the other of Canterbury township. A settlement upon this basis was assented to and concluded, October, 1706, between the Honorable Governor and the Council and Representatives in the General Court, and the usual legal instruments of quit-claim and confirmation interchanged and recorded. At the same date, upon the request of the proprietors and inhabitants of the town of Plainfield, the Assembly granted them a Patent for confirmation of the lands in their township under the seal of the Colony. This happy termination of their many conflicts and difficulties greatly rejoiced the inhabitants of Plainfield. The bounds of their town were now first laid down and accurately described by Captain John Prents, the surveyor of New London County. The Quinebaug River was made the west bound of the town, and the Preston line settled to present satisfaction. The instruments confirming this amicable settlement were received with appropriate formalities. Their old friend, the Rev. Mr. Noyes, was invited “to go to the Governor and take the deed from the Governor



to the town, in the town's behalf, and to deliver the bill to his Honor the Governor upon his Honor delivering the deed to the person sent by the town." The person sent was William Marsh, who received the deed from Mr. Noyes and presented it to the town authorities. January 1, 1707, it was voted, "That the present town-committee keep the town's Patent until the town orders it otherwise;" also, "That what the town owes to Mr. Caleb Stanley, Lieutenant Hollister and the County Surveyor for laying out the town and attaining the deed of the Governor and attaining a patent—the town will take care and pay as soon as may be."

This settlement, so satisfactory to the people of Plainfield, gave great offence to Major Fitch and other Quinebaug proprietors and to the inhabitants of Canterbury, who, in May, 1707, most earnestly remonstrated against "a certain pretended patent or deed of settlement of all the lands in Plainfield and part of the lands in Canterbury to a certain number of persons particularly named," which conveyance they declared to be "unjust, unequal, unreasonable and contrary to law, justice and equity:"—

"1. Contrary to the nature of granting townships, namely, to grant to particular men the whole in fee simple, thereby to exclude others coming into said towns or the impeopling the place and putting a stop to the increase and growth of the Colony.

2. Patent unjust, in that much of the land granted to your petitioners in Plainfield is comprehended in it.

3. Wrong, erroneous and very unjust, in that it includes several particular men's lands and estates, which they had bought by good purchase of Owaneco.

4. Contains lands that were in controversy.

Finally, we may say that if you do not see cause to vacate said unjust and illegal deed, yet it can in no wise take away the lands of her Majesty's subjects, or those such who have a good and perfect title from a good authority under the Corporation seal, and more than twenty years passed, nor however, will it in law disable this Colony or any authority therein to try any difference about the titles, the whole Colony being bound by warrants in said patent—the land to the grantees and their heirs for ever."

To this violent remonstrance from the irascible Major, was added a request from the selectmen of Canterbury that their bounds might not be altered as established in 1702-3—wherefore, to prevent any trouble or damage to that township or other of its inhabitants, the Assembly declared "the said patent to be void," and ordered "a new patent to be granted according to usual form, if desired. Cost allowed to Canterbury contra Plainfield is £1. 1s. cash and £2. 4s. 7d. pay."

Whether "desired" or not, the new patent was not made out, and Plainfield continued to hold possession of all the land east of the Quinebaug, defending herself in actions brought against her by her Canterbury neighbors and ordering a land-rate to pay the executions obtained by them, leaving it to the selectmen to draw on some persons and mitigate the rate of others "as they see cause." The land division

ordered two years before was now perfected and distributed—all the land in Plainfield, exclusive of the meadows and General Field being divided into five sections, called “eighths.” The first and most southernmost included John Gallup, Sen., John Smith, Ebenezer Harris, John Fellows, Peter Crary and son and Ben Adam Gallup. The second eighth—north of and adjoining the first—was taken up by Henry Stevens, Deacon William Douglas, William Gallup, Joseph Coit, Tho. Stevens, Jun., and Samuel Shepard. In the third, north of the second, were Benj. Palmer, Joshua Whitney, Nathaniel Jewell, Stephen Hall, Thomas Williams, Benjamin Spalding, Sen., Timothy Pierce and Joseph Spalding. The fourth division, abutting south on the third and north on Moosup River, comprised Thomas Stevens, Sen., James Kingsbury, Ed. Yeomans, William Marsh, Jacob Warren, John Spalding, the heirs of Thomas Pierce and Edward Spalding; “while Matthias Button, Ephraim and Isaac Wheeler, Samuel Howe, James Deane, Joseph Parkhurst and John Yeomans belonged to the fifth eighth, north of Moosup,” whose bounds began at the Indian Fordway and extended west to the Quinebaug. Various meadows, designated as Snake, Apple-tree and Half, were laid out in divisions of five and one-fourth acres to each proprietor. Black Hill was also laid out and distributed, with the exception of twelve acres bound over to Thomas Williams and Joshua Whitney, in security for four pounds in money lent to the town. William Green, Robert Williams and Francis Smith were allowed each a hundred acres and house-lot near Egunk Hill, they bearing their proportion of charge for maintaining an orthodox ministry and other town charges and paying the town certain specified sums of money. January 2, 1707, it was voted, “That there be forty twelve-acre divisions laid out within the General Field, which is the third twelve-acre division within said field, and also a second division of interval in sixty proportions, each man making his pitch according to his draft.” Twenty acres of land were freely granted to Thomas Kingsbury, “providentially cast into Plainfield after long captivity, having lost all that he had by the enemy.” Liberty was also given to Indian Thomas “to prepare three acres of land that he had already broken up,” and Ephraim Warren was allowed “to enjoy his labor in getting fencing stuff in cedar swamp without molestation from the town.” John Fellows was appointed “to have inspection of cedar swamps, and if any one not belonging to the town take timber or rails to seize the same and prosecute on behalf of the town.” As Canterbury men continued to appropriate cedar and valley land by virtue of the original compact, a committee of five men was chosen, July 8, 1707, “To consider some way which may be most beneficial

to defend the town's rights or for the defence of persons orderly settled in the town."

Now that Plainfield had come into full possession of her territory, she was deemed competent to bear her part of public charges. The list of estates presented in October, 1707, valued them at £1,265; her inhabitants were about fifty. John Fellows was sent as her first representative to the General Court in May, 1708. Thomas Williams was now lieutenant of her train-band; Timothy Pierce, ensign. October, 1708, her estates were valued at £1,890; her male inhabitants numbered fifty-five.

Although the inhabitants of Plainfield in their first mutual agreement had charged the selectmen to take special care in the matter of schools, no public provision was made for them till December, 1707, when "part of the country land was allowed for the encouragement of a school," and Lieutenant Williams, Joseph Spalding and Deacon Douglas directed "to take care that there be one." A year later, the town voted, "To send to Mr. James Deane to see if we can agree with him to be schoolmaster," who agreed to undertake that office for half a year, "for what the county allows and what parents and masters of children shall agree with me for."

Mr. Coit was married soon after his settlement to Miss Experience Wheeler, of Stonington, and continued to officiate in the pastoral office to general satisfaction. In 1708, a contribution was ordered for him above his salary, "Palmer and Button to see what each will give," and in the following year his salary was "increased to £60, in grain and provision pay as yearly stated by General Court—those paying money to have one-third abated."

The care of the numerous "ways" about the town involved much charge and labor, and so many complaints were brought that, February, 1707, the town voted, "That if any person complains to the committee for want of a convenient way, the committee taking a view and finding that complaint was made without cause, the person so complaining shall pay the committee for their time." The Quinebaug and Moosup Rivers were still inimical to the peace of the town. The Shepards had control of the best crossing places and used it for their own advantage. Complaint being made that Isaac Shepard endeavored to hinder persons passing Moosup River where it was thought to be most convenient, the town appointed a committee "to see where the river might be most conveniently cros't and lay out a convenient by-way across it." Attempts were repeatedly made to bridge the "tedious" and troublesome Quinebaug. Committees were appointed to discourse with the selectmen of Canterbury concerning the best way or ways for crossing,

and a bridge was actually accomplished in 1709, probably by private enterprise as no town action is reported.

The increase in the yield of grain making more mills needful, James Hilliard, in 1709, received from the town several acres of land north of Moosup for his encouragement to maintain a sufficient corn-mill, "the grantee, to the best of his endeavor, to maintain a sufficiency of corn-meal for the use of the town." To protect their fields from the depredations of birds it was voted, "That they who bring black-birds' heads to any one of the selectmen shall be allowed by the town one penny a head, provided they be killed before the 15th of May; for a crow, sixpence per head." Any one that killed a rattle-snake and brought the tail with some of the flesh on it, was allowed twopence per tail. Indian Jeremy and his brother David, having killed two wolves, were each allowed ten shillings for encouragement of such work.

Cattle, though not troublesome, required occasional restraint, and a pound was ordered in 1708, "in the senter of the town, near the meeting-house." A rate was levied for "the pound, stox and bords for meeting-house." Money was also given to the selectmen to buy a "book of records, a black staff and waits" for the town. A committee was chosen to discourse with those men who had served as a guard upon the Sabbath and agree with them, and John Deane, their sergeant, was allowed nine pounds of powder out of the town stock for their use.

In 1710, it was voted, "That the present meeting-house be decently finished, by finishing the seats below and sealing also, and also the sealing above and making the galleries and all to be made decent and comfortable to meet in, to attend upon the public worship of God." Every householder in town was required to give to the Widow Samans "one peck of Indian corn a year in consideration for her to sweep the meeting-house; so long as she doth it, the corne to be carried to her." It was also agreed, "That the place which has been for several years improved by the inhabitants for the burial of the dead shall abide and remain for that use," and a committee was chosen "to see and appoint what quantity of land might be needful, and also to stake a convenient way for the inhabitants to go unto the same as they have occasion, and also to appoint a place for the Indians to bury their dead." This Indian Burying Ground, rendered so needful by the rapid decay of the Quinebaugs, was situated in the eastern part of the town, in a place where it is said chiefs and Sagamores and many previous generations of the tribe had been deposited.

As all the available public land was now distributed, such new inhabitants as from time to time appeared purchased their farms and homesteads from previous proprietors. Daniel Lawrence settled south



of Plainfield village about 1708, and became a prominent public man. Sons of proprietors, as they came to man's estate, were admitted inhabitants. In 1709, John Hutchins, Daniel Lawrence, Ephraim Fellows, Ephraim Kingsbury, Benj. Spalding, Jun., Henry Stevens, Jun., Edward Spalding, Jun., and John Hall had liberty to vote for town officers. James Deane still served as town-clerk. Thomas Williams was appointed, in 1700, a Justice of Peace for the County of New London. The representatives serving during this period were John Fellows, Thomas Williams, Joshua Whitney and John Smith. In 1711, Plainfield attained to the dignity of a full train-band, Thomas Williams being confirmed as captain, Timothy Pierce as lieutenant, and William Douglas as ensign, and a rate was ere long ordered to pay for "the cullers and to procure other necessary banners for the company."

A fourth twelve-acre division was laid out in the General Field and "lots drawn for it" at a public meeting, February 7, 1710.. A new committee was also chosen to act in fencing this Field, which agreed, "That all the proprietors should maintain their divisions of fence, lots not disposed of done at the town's cost." North proprietors to secure the north and northeast end against y<sup>e</sup> river from the northeast corner of our General Field to the mouth of Blackwell's Brook; Benjamin Spalding and all south of him secure to the new bridge, and that part of the fence between Robert Green's and Tracy's; proprietors south of the new bridge secure that part of the field from Major Fitch's Neck to Norwich line."

The public travel through Plainfield had now become very great, so that the governments of both Connecticut and Rhode Island were constrained to provide for its better accommodation. In 1711, the General Assembly of Rhode Island ordered, "That a highway should be laid out from Providence through Providence, Warwick and West Greenwich to Plainfield." Representations were made to the General Assembly of Connecticut, that travelers from the westward to Boston and Providence met with great difficulty, and were exposed to great danger for want of a suitable country road through Plainfield, both from the centre and south parts of the town to its eastern bounds, whereupon it was enacted, October, 1712, "That the selectmen of Plainfield do take immediate care, by a jury or otherwise as the law directs, to lay out the two roads above-mentioned within their own town; and also, that the said selectmen continue the said country road or roads up to the river lying about one mile and a half to the eastward of Francis Smith's—to be done at the charge of this Government so far as it extends to the eastward of the bounds of the said town."

William Marsh, John Fellows and Thomas Stevens were appointed by the town to carry out this enactment, and straitway laid out a high-

way from the Quinebaug River to the east bound of the town, crossing the "third eighth" and the site of Plainfield village. The land needful was given by the proprietors—Joshua Whitney, Benjamin Spalding, Nathaniel Jewell, Daniel Lawrence, John Hall and John Smith,—“in consideration that it is convenient and necessary for travelers, being the nearest and best way to and from Providence, Boston, Rhode Island, Narraganset and many other places, and convenient for town and country.” “A miry slough, eastward from Daniel Lawrence’s,” was transformed into “a good and sufficient causeway” by the labor of some of the inhabitants. The road was laid out four rods wide and eight rods at some parts of Egunk Hill for the convenience of loaded carts. The committee continued it beyond the bounds of the town to the Moosup ford-way, where a safe and sufficient bridge was constructed at the expense of the Colony, by Miles Jordan and Francis Smith, in 1714. Rhode Island’s part of this highway was completed the same year and thrown open to the public, so that communication with Providence and other large towns was very greatly facilitated.

## XX.

### BOUNDARY QUARRELS. NEW MEETING-HOUSE. MORTALITY.

**T**HOUGH Plainfield was now apparently peaceable and thriving, with lands equally laid out and many public improvements, she had never ceased to quarrel over boundary lines and press petitions for enlargement. The laying out of the township of Killingly, in 1708, effectually precluded all further hopes of addition on the northward, though Plainfield did not submit without opposition and remonstrance and various negotiations in reference to the bounds. The point was settled by an enactment of the Assembly, October, 1709, that Plainfield’s north bound “should be and remain as the same was run and settled by Captain John Prentts, surveyor.”

The vacant territory on the east still greatly excited the cupidity of Plainfield proprietors, and no pains were spared to secure its annexation. After their own lands were parceled out, they took possession of its commons for pasturage, and its few inhabitants were protected and cherished and allowed to participate in the privileges of the town. Petition after petition was sent to the General Court, showing that the lands were good for nothing and yet they could not live without them, but all their efforts were unavailing.

With Canterbury, Plainfield maintained an incessant border warfare. That township had never submitted to the Court’s decree, robbing her

of a valued part of her promised territory, and continued to take her share of the hay and help herself to cedar rails according to the original compact. Plainfield appointed a committee to defend the town's rights, with power to recover rails and withstand prosecution, against which vote William Marsh, Joseph Spalding, Ebenezer Harris and James Kingsbury had the honesty and fairness to protest—"if the town intends the rails which were gotten by Canterbury," showing that they, at least, still recognized the original agreement. Plainfield assumed full jurisdiction of all the land east of the Quinebaug, laying out divisions and ordering fences at pleasure; while Canterbury retaliated by pulling down fences and carrying off hay and grain. Innumerable lawsuits were carried on between the contending parties. Samuel Adams, Obadiah Johnson, Tixhall Ensworth and Robert Green were arrested for taking from Greenwich Plain a parcel of grain, and though judged "not guilty," had to give account of grain. Gallup and Smith complained of Ensworth, also, for carrying off fence and recovered "two loads of posts and rails, with costs." The Tracys sued Thomas Brown, of Canterbury, for rail-timber, while, at a later stage in the controversy, Major Fitch, Elisha Paine, Samuel Cleveland, John Dyer, and nearly all the prominent men of Canterbury, were indicted "for stealing loads of hay," and had each to pay ten shillings to the Treasury and twenty shillings to John Smith. At length, after ten years of wrangling and confusion, the General Court, in a revision and settlement of various disputed bounds, ordered the line between Plainfield and Canterbury to be re-stated, "pursuant to the agreement of the inhabitants of the east and west sides of the town of Plainfield, made on December 24, 1702." The line was then run by John Plumb, county surveyor, in 1714-15, a quarter of a mile east from the centre of Peagscomsuck Island, and thence in a straight line to the south bound of the town. This so-called settlement only increased the confusion and disorder, Plainfield resolutely refusing to yield her accustomed jurisdiction, and Canterbury assuming not only jurisdiction but ownership of the land accruing to her. Open war was waged by the contending townships and many acts of Border-ruffianism perpetrated on both sides. After some years of strife and litigation, Plainfield thus appealed to the General Court:—

"Oct. 12, 1721. We, your poor petitioners, inhabitants and proprietors of y<sup>e</sup> town of Plainfield, humbly sheweth: That, whereas, notwithstanding a supposed agreement made by part of the inhabitants of the east and west sides in respect to a dividing line between them, when this agreement came to be laid before y<sup>e</sup> Hon. Assembly for confirmation y<sup>e</sup> Hon. Court granted the [Quinebaug] River, and, whereas, the Court had not granted us any fee in our first grant, doth show as looking upon it as not to lie in them—We, your humble petitioners, did propose, at no small cost, to purchase this property of the Hon. Winthrops, who, many years before, had purchased of the natives, which purchase had been approved by King Charles of blessed

memory, and then we got confirmation from the Gen. Assembly and proceeded to lay out our land, &c. But now we are sorry to be obliged to expose the nakedness of our neighbors of Canterbury, which otherwise we should have covered with a mantle of love, as far as we could with a good conscience, but they, without giving any notice for the establishing of a line according to first agreement, and the General Court, not so well considering what they had done before, granted the line according to first agreement. And, whereas, our Canterbury neighbors, not sufficiently checked for their first fault as contrary to law, but too much countenanced, took encouragement, as it is the nature of sin to grow from bad to worse, and blinded the eyes of the Hon. Assembly with a most abominable falsehood—all which is greatly to our hurt, especially in the use Canterbury is making of the same, as may be evident :

1. Since the new line was fixed, Canterbury people came up in the midst of summer, when all our grain was standing, and pulled up the fence from the General Field, thus laying the field open to be destroyed by all sorts of devouring creatures to our unaccountable damage.

2. Some have come upon us in a riotous and disorderly manner when we were making hay on lands that we had honestly bought and been possessed of many years, and laid violent hands on some of us and dragged us down to New London by force, without writ or warrant, and feloniously carried away our hay that we had mowed.

3. Some have carried off our corn that we had planted and tilled for the support of ourselves and families.

4. Some have had their corn reaped and carried away, hay mown and carried away, and have not known by whom till Canterbury people have boasted of doing it under pretence of this line, so that they have to gather corn before it is ripe; all which are not fancies of the brain but real matters of fact.

Further, the records of this land are in Canterbury—an intolerable hardship to be laid on ye King's subjects and not to be tolerated in a christian government. We beg the Hon. Court to help us in our distressing difficulties and establish the first grant, for these reasons :—

1. It was, upon due consideration, granted and patented to us by this Court, and thereby established to us according to law.

2. In that, according to the Court's fears, if that Canterbury doth come to the said supposed line, it will not only be hurtful but totally ruining to our General Field, which is our greatest dependence to support our families and charges in church and state.

3. Township so small without it that we cannot support ourselves and church.

4. If we should have it, yet Canterbury will be much bigger than we shall be.

5. Seeing what Canterbury has done hath been by under hand dealing and falsehood, and hath made such bad use of the same and hath refused to fulfil agreements—we pray the General Assembly to take off the incumbrance which Canterbury has caused to be laid upon our patent; but if we cannot prevail and Canterbury must come to the proposed line, to say whether the fee did ever lie in them and whether they have granted the same to Canterbury, which we suppose contrary to ye intent of the Court.

Eph. Wheeler.  
John Crery.

John Hall.  
Eph. Kingsbury.  
Ed. Spalding."

To this latter query, the Assembly replied, that the transfer of land "did *not* convey the fee but only powers and privileges;" ordered, "That Plainfield records should be in no wise invalidated by the act of division," and ignored the remainder of the memorial.

Before Plainfield had submitted to her loss in the Quinebaug Valley, she was called to battle for the vacant land eastward. It was rumored that this Colony land, so ardently coveted, was about to be annexed to



the Volunteer's Land, south of it. A number of the most prominent citizens—Thomas Williams, Jacob Warren, Joshua Whitney and John Fellows—hastened with a petition to the General Court, October 3, 1715, praying that Prent's former survey might be established for their bounds and this land east annexed to them. At the same time, Richard Williams, Miles Jordan, John Smith and others, "living east of Plainfield, hearing that their land was to be annexed to the Volunteers," most earnestly protested, "by reason of that town being so large already that some of the settlers live seven or eight miles from the meeting-house spot—a long Sabbath-day's journey,"—and begged to be annexed to Plainfield, as every way more convenient. In response to these and contrary requests from the people of Voluntown, the General Court ordered, "That the surveyor of the County of New London do, if either of the said towns will be at the charge of it, survey the lands lying east of Plainfield, south of Killingly, north of Voluntown and to the east bounds of the Colony, and lay a plot of the same, with an account of the quality, before the General Court . . . that they may be able to resolve of the future manner of the regulating of the same." This work having been done by the New London surveyor, Mr. John Plumb, the Plainfield petitioners renewed their request for the land the following October, but no answer was vouchsafed them and the vacant land was left unappropriated for several years.

Thus foiled on every side in her attempt to secure enlargement, Plainfield next sought relief by appropriating lands within her own borders included in the grants of Major Fitch from Owaneco, and hitherto allowed to that gentleman and his grantees. This attempt to seize land long held in peaceable possession, called forth a storm of indignation from Major Fitch and his adherents, and many frantic petitions to the General Court. These infant settlements were all like children, running crying to their parents with every want and complaint, but none equalled Plainfield in the number, variety and importunity of its petitions. The outraged settlers whose lands were now threatened appealed to the General Assembly, May 10, 1716, in this piteous strain:—

"Unto whom shall the oppressed apply themselves? In the first place they sigh, they groan and send up their cries unto the Lord God, who in his holy word directs in such cases to apply ourselves unto the earthly judges our rulers and fathers. Thence it is, we, with deepest humility as on our bended knees, lay before you our miserable, deplorable, undone condition unless God or our King or your compassionate selves will relieve us.

The case is this: We have settled on the south part of Plainfield many years since, which lands we purchased. We find that the plow lands and meadows at the west part of our lots had been purchased of the natives and confirmed by seal to Major Fitch and some others in 1686, and he having bought the others out, laid out our allotments, about fourteen in number—some fifty some sixty rods wide and about two miles long,—so that we have improvable land lying west of us; and to the east out-lots, pasture and commonage, with

timber, which Major Fitch caused to be laid out to promote plantation work, which allotments were recorded (we suppose) more than twelve years since and now stand on Plainfield book, and many of the allotments were laid out by Thomas Williams and James Deane.

And, secondly, we inform, that several of us have for twelve or fourteen years done our proportion in town charges, both as to settling minister and public buildings; yet hath the town of Plainfield voted to lay out both our plow lands on the west and our out-lots on the east, and hath appointed men to lay them out, which is done and recorded, nor do they allow and lay out to us any lands in them, so that, as we humbly conceive, their presumptuously so acting, if still allowed of and countenanced, we and our families are and must be undone. We, therefore, pray for a patent of our lands lying east of the former patent, according to each one's lawful purchase; not prejudicing any town's legal right. Protest signed by several, and if some others had opportunity, they might have signed what we here show, and that twelve years since we declared against the unjust and illegal proceedings of Plainfield, contrary to their grant for town privileges.

James Fitch.  
James Welch.

Elisha Paine.  
Thomas Harris.

James Deane.  
John Deane.  
Philip Bump.

Some proprietors had not opportunity to sign and some are children."

The town authorities, in justification of this measure, referred to "the Great Troubler of Israel" as causing all the trouble by complaining of them as beyond their lines, but neither plea nor response received any attention from the obdurate fathers, who left their troublesome children to fight out their own battles. A committee was appointed to attend the surveyor upon Major Fitch's notification—Joshua Whitney and others protesting against the persons chosen, "lest they should do some irregular act that would not be justifiable." William Gallup and John Smith were directed "to go to New London and take advice of the Honored Governor and others," by whose mediation the matter was probably settled.

All these losses and squabbles did not prevent growth and public improvements. New inhabitants appeared from time to time. Thomas Williams was now town-clerk; Timothy Pierce, tavern-keeper; Samuel Douglas, school-master; and Samuel Blunt, the man to sweep the meeting-house, having twenty shillings per year for his pains. William Deane received permission to make a dam across Moosup River, by his house, for setting up mills. In 1716, John Watson was "improved to keep school—the deacons and selectmen to order the school and receive the money." It was next agreed, "that the school should be kept in three places, a suitable place provided for the school-master to quarter at and a house suitable to accommodate each part during the time of the school being continued in that part, to be provided at the charge of each part, and if any neglect to provide such place the committee to order the school master to go to the next part. School to be kept first over Moosup River; next in middle; next in south part."

In 1717, a movement was initiated for the erection of a new meeting-

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remote from the public worship of God but expected to have it much nearer when Plainfield should erect a new meeting-house," "but the place now stated would only bring farther difficulties upon them, being more remote than formerly and very difficult traveling, by reason of bad ways, stony, spongy and soft land, never likely to be remedied, and begged for a more central location, not only on their account, but for their poor neighbors who lived eastward on y<sup>e</sup> country lands," and also "somewhat accomadable for our neighbors who live in Voluntown with much difficulty, living very remote and ever likely to be without the public means of grace by reason of y<sup>e</sup> brokenness and barren rocky land;" and if the Assembly could not now change the location of Plainfield meeting-house, they begged them "in their great wisdom to find out some way to relieve them from such tedious travel on the Sabbath," either by annexing us to poor Voluntown, and giving to them and us and the inhabitants now living on the country land all your interest in those lands, and make of these three places one religious society, and state a place on the west side of Pine Hill for a meeting-house and invest them with customary powers and privileges."

These petitions, like most that came from Plainfield, were rejected by both houses and the meeting-house remained on the place assigned near Blodget's—half a mile north of the site of the present Congregational house of worship—and slowly attained completion. In January, 1709, the committee was directed to provide stuff for finishing and order the placing of seats, and in the following year, to take boards from the old house to the new; dispose of the room behind the fore-seats in the several galleries to such persons as will finish them at their own cost; and to see that there be some way made under the eaves to carry the water off from the sides of the house. In September, 1720, the house was ready for occupation. John Howe, Deacon Warren, Timothy Pierce, John Crery and Daniel Lawrence were chosen to seat it; those over fifty years according to age, others by estates—allowing one head to a seat; pews to be distributed according to estates. So arduous was the task of the committee, that they were allowed one pound in money for care and service. In December, Joseph Lawrence was chosen "to take care of the boys and girls Sabbath days and restrain them from playing and profaning the Sabbath." The seating of the meeting-house proving unsatisfactory, in 1721, it was voted, that the first regulations should not stand and new ones were adopted. A pew was built at the town's cost, probably for the minister; Thomas Williams to build the second pew, east side of pulpit. It was also ordered that the boys and girls under thirteen years of age, "should sit in the two hind-seats of

the body except the two last seats; the girls on the women's side, the boys on the men's—male negroes behind the boys; female negroes behind the girls." It is evident that the boys and girls were both numerous and disorderly, as a man was now perched up in the gallery to observe the young people below and restrain them from doing any damage to the meeting-house "by opening the windows or any wise damnifying the glass and if any (him or her), did profane the Sabbath by laughing or behaving unseemly, he should call him or her by name and so reprove them therefor." These arrangements being perfected and the new meeting-house fairly accomplished, the relics of the first were sold at vendue for twelve pounds sterling. Mr. Coit continued to labor faithfully and acceptably, and after the completion of the new meeting-house, had twenty pounds added to his salary. A slight "uneasiness" was developed the following year, and removed by the conciliatory efforts of a mediatory committee.

In 1717-18, John Stoyell, one of the most noted school-masters of the day, was employed by several persons in the middle of the town to instruct their own children and others for twelve months. The town accordingly ordered all the school money for the year to be delivered to these persons and made it the public school for the whole town, the cost to each child being four-pence a week beside the public money. In 1719, Henry Wake was school-master three months at Edward Spalding's quarter, receiving for service his diet and five pounds. In 1721, Mr. Walton maintained perambulatory schools in the different neighborhoods, the town paying him twelve pounds, finding board and keeping a horse for him. In 1720, the town was divided into two school districts north and south of meeting-house, each to order its own schools. In May, 1722, the first school-house was ordered—forty or fifty rods from the meeting-house on the country road, and in 1725, two others were completed—one at the south end between James Deane's and Thomas Smith's; one at the north, near Joseph Shepard's.

The bridge over the Quinebaug having now been carried away, Samuel Shepard, living on the public road near a convenient place for crossing, was at considerable charge to provide a ferry-boat sufficient to carry a horse and man and was allowed by the Assembly, May, 1722, "to keep said ferry for the space of five years next coming; and the fees thereof, are stated to be four-pence for horse and man." No other public ferry was allowed between the towns, Shepard was to keep good and suitable vessels for transportation over the ferry and attend to its service.

Notwithstanding her repeated rebuffs and failures, Plainfield continued to make application for the country land eastward, accruing to her, as she persistently maintained both by manifest destiny and present

possession. In 1719, a special effort was made and John Fellows and Timothy Pierce appointed to press their claims for this land—as no more than a lawful equivalent for their land on the Quinebaug—and even offered forty pounds for it. A committee was accordingly appointed by the General Court, which after viewing the land and considering all the circumstances recommended its annexation to the township of Voluntown then struggling for existence. This advice was followed and the contested country land incorporated into the more needy township—Plainfield still refusing to accept the situation and resolutely retaining its commons for pasturage. Even as late as 1723, she protested “against the new addition to Voluntown which takes 759 acres lying within the ancient limits of Plainfield included in Winthrop’s deed” and obtained a fresh committee to inquire into facts.

The difficulties with Canterbury were not removed even when the question of fee was settled in Plainfield’s favor, and both towns continued “to fight it out on that line” for many years. Committees were long requisite “to see persons that pull down or demolish Canterbury fence,” and numerous petitions vainly urged the re-statement and settlement of the boundary line. The General Field, so needful for the sustenance of the inhabitants, gave endless trouble and vexation; its fencing was maintained with great labor and difficulty and its proper care and clearing necessitated the employment of from sixteen to twenty-three “field-drivers”—a public town office instituted about 1720.

Plainfield’s unhappy land and boundary quarrels not only retarded her growth and prosperity, but developed much recklessness and lawlessness among its inhabitants. Reports of many disorders and irregularities are found in New London Court records: acts not only of insubordination and violence but of scandalous immoralities. A son of one of the oldest families was severely punished, “for falsifying certain bills of credit” and “uttering them so falsified,” while a prominent resident of the town, convicted of improper intimacy with the wife of one of its oldest and most respected citizens, was sentenced—“To be whipped twenty-five stripes on his naked body; burnt on the forehead with the letter A by a hot iron and to wear a halter about his neck on the outside of his garment during his abode in this Colony so that it may be visible, and when found without it, upon proper information, to be whipped again and pay charge of prosecution.”

No record is left of the growth and condition of the Plainfield church during this period. Joshua Whitney was elected to the deacon’s office, upon the decease of William Douglas in 1719. Thomas Williams, one of Plainfield’s most active public men, died in 1723. Timothy Pierce succeeded him in the captaincy of the train band and other public offices, served as representative from 1717 to 1726; in 1718, was appointed

justice of the peace; in 1725, justice of the Quorum for New London County, and judge of the Probate Court in the district of Windham. In 1725, Plainfield was visited by a "very distressing sickness and great mortality," so that they could not get help among themselves to attend the sick but were obliged to rely upon other towns for aid. About twenty persons were buried in town within a few months, including some of its first and leading citizens, viz. John Hall, Samuel Shepard, James Deane, Benjamin Palmer, Matthias Button, Ephraim Wheeler, Phillip Bump and Samuel Howe. The aboriginal inhabitants of the Quinebaug Country were now rapidly passing away—not so much from any violent disease as from their change of habits, and especially from excessive use of liquor, from which it was found impossible to restrain them.

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## XXI.

### CANTERBURY.

CANTERBURY, when endowed with town privileges, October, 1703, had but few inhabitants—only ten west-side residents signing the articles of separation—but their character and circumstances made amends for the smallness of their number. Most of them were men of means and position, accustomed to the management of public affairs and well fitted to initiate and carry on the settlement of the new township. Major Fitch, as "lord-proprietor" of much of the land, had probably the sole sway for a time, but Elisha Paine, the Adamses, Clevelandes and Johnsons, were men of energy and public spirit and soon assumed the reins of government. Their residences were in the east of the town, overlooking the Quinebaug valley. The privilege of Rowland's Brook, a short distance northwest from Peagscomsuck, was granted to Samuel Adams in 1703, for building and maintaining a corn-mill. Suitable "ways" connected the settlement with Norwich, Windham and distant Woodstock. Obadiah Johnson, living near the Quinebaug opposite Isaac Shepard's, was allowed, in 1703, to keep a house of public entertainment—"provided he keeps good order"—and here town meetings were held and public business transacted.

No record of the organization of town government is preserved, but it was doubtless soon effected. The first town-clerk was probably Elisha Paine; the first selectmen, William Johnson, Samuel Adams and



Eleazer Brown. The first recorded public act of the town was its protest against the breach of the articles of separation, making the Quinebaug River the boundary line between the townships instead of a line due south from the centre of Peagscomsuck Island—a change which Canterbury never consented to and which caused, as we have seen, endless confusion and contentions.

The absence of early records makes it difficult to trace the progress of the town, but it was probably very slow for several years. The tenure of the land was prejudicial to its growth and best interests. "Before we were a town," reports Mr. Samuel Adams, "Major Fitch, Richard Bushnell and the Tracys had swept up all the good land upon the Quinebaug, with all the other good land, wheresoever it lay, and all for a song or a trifle; so that there was nothing left but poor rocky hills and hungry land such as no wise man under Heaven would have ventured to settle upon." Settlers were encouraged to come by a promise of good land upon reasonable terms if they would settle a town, but found themselves deceived and deluded. Land titles were obscure and conflicting and some tracts had been sold and re-sold by Owaneco till it was impossible to tell who was the rightful owner, and often subdividing and cultivating such rough lands as were left them, the settlers had often to pay off successive claimants or be sued from Court to Court to their great cost and damage. Mr. Adams declares, that he "bought first of Major Fitch; then of Captain Mason and Owaneco; third of Captain John Mason, so as to avoid all trouble, and lastly of Captain Bushnell; and in addition to all this, was harassed by suits with the Tracys." Other settlers met with equal difficulties in securing land and titles, and had to pay oppressive rents and heavy rates and charges.

With these obstacles and difficulties, population increased but slowly. Eleazer Brown of Chelmsford, bought land at Wanungatuck of the Tracys in 1704. Jonathan Ashley, Benjamin Baldwin and Henry Smith appear among the inhabitants in 1705. Samuel Butts of Dorchester settled near Wanungatuck in 1706, and John Pelton and Jeremiah Plympton, Charles and Paul Davenport of Dorchester, bought land in the south of Canterbury, "with buildings and fences," of Jeremiah Fitch the same year.

As the difficulty of crossing the Quinebaug River to attend religious worship, had been the chief ground of town organization, the Canterbury people, as soon as practicable, procured a minister and established regular religious services, prepared timber and made some arrangements for building a meeting-house. In 1705, Robert Green, for thirty shillings, made over to the inhabitants of Canterbury, three and a half acres of land on a hill near his house, "to build and erect a

meeting-house on, or for training, or any other use the said inhabitants of Canterbury shall see cause for,"—a plot still known as Canterbury Green. The number of settlers was still so small that they felt unequal to the great work of building a house of worship and settling a minister without increase of territory and population. A strip of unappropriated land on the north was found to be as essential to their existence and prosperity, as "the country land east" to their Plainfield neighbors. Some of the residents of this land—Richard Adams, John Woodward, Edward Spalding and Jabez Utter—were anxious to join with them in establishing religious worship. After one or two fruitless appeals, for assistance and enlargement, Major Fitch and Elisha Paine thus petitioned the General Assembly:—

"Whereas two years ago you were pleased to grant us, the inhabitants of Canterbury, to be a town separate from Plainfield, yet although it was not at first our seeking or desire yet being over-persuaded and advised by the Reverends Messrs. Noyes, Saltonstall and Treat to yield unto said desires and offers of our neighbors on y<sup>e</sup> east side of the Quinebaug, according to an agreement that has been before you more than once; and since, also we did petition this Assembly for that which is so highly necessary, viz. to put your sanction to an agreement for the equal and just way of raising our public charges, partly on lands unimproved (as hath been the reasonable custom in new places, until our meeting-house and ministerial house be built). We also petitioned for y<sup>e</sup> enlargement of our town bounds northward up to Captain Blackwell's south line—it being about two and a half or three miles. As to these, our so reasonable requests, the honorable and considerate Lower House did once and again in two several General Assemblies grant our request, but once and again it was stopped and lodged in y<sup>e</sup> Upper House, for what just reason we know not. But if any be, we humbly pray we may be informed of it; and that which makes it seem yet more strange to us, is, that in all such grants, particular persons' property is secured. Honored Gentlemen and since it is so that we have gotten timber for a meeting-house and are treating with a young minister to settle with us, who has been some time with us, so as that now its verily the case with us, if that this Honorable Assembly do not grant our desires, y<sup>e</sup> House of God will not be built and no minister settled. That yourselves may be more sensible of our condition, we have made choice of our loving neighbors, Major James Fitch and Mr. Elisha Paine, to offer this our third petition, who are y<sup>e</sup> Queen's loyal subjects and your willing and humble servants.  
May, 1705."

The Assembly, thereupon, approved, ratified and confirmed the method agreed upon for levying rates and referred the request for enlargement to the General Court in October, which failed to consider it—whereupon Canterbury, in her zeal to possess this land, came again to the Honorable Assembly, May 6, 1706, with her *fourth* application, humbly showing:—

"Whereas formerly, so now we humbly pray that there be a grant of an enlargement on our town bounds at the north end up to Captain Blackwell's south line, which is about three miles and in reason can not be added to any other town neither is it capable of being a town by itself—

The Honorable Deputies were so just as to grant our reasonable desire but how or why it stopped in the Worshipful Upper House, we know not and 'tis so much the more strange to us in that all such grants property is to be secured so that no person can be damnified. We pray you, kind gentlemen, to consider our condition; our town about four miles wide; Norwich on y<sup>e</sup> south; Windham on y<sup>e</sup> west and Plainfield on the east—so that there is

no other way for an enlargement but this strip of land which we have thus prayed-for; without ye expectation of which we would never have undertook to be a town; without which, all our hitherto endeavors to be a town, is like to come to nought; our timber we have got for a meeting-house is likely to lie and rot—the people will do nothing more about it because of our straightness; no minister dare venture to settle amongst us unless we be enlarged; our inhabitants that love religion are drawing off and our lands are like to fall in such men's hands as care not for the gospel—so that ere long there will not be so much as the name of religion in this place. Now your granting unto us that which was so just and reasonable on your part and absolutely necessary on our part will oblige us to pray that the God of justice and mercy would be pleased to bless and direct you, so that we, and all the new plantations who are going forward to build God's house and settle a minister, may have occasion to bless God for you and your administrations. So prays your willing and obedient servants, the inhabitants of Canterbury, by

Elisha Paine,  
William Johnson,  
Eleazer Brown, Select-men.

Captain Joseph Wadsworth and Captain Nichols of Hartford, with our neighbors Major Fitch and Tixhall Ensworth, chosen to appear and manage this petition."

Undismayed by the deplorable consequences threatened, the "Worshipful Upper House" still refused to grant this petition for reasons hereafter indicated. The failure of attempts to secure jurisdiction of the valley land has been already related, and the southern and western bounds of Canterbury were equally unsettled and unsatisfactory. The southern line was easily rectified, but the western remained in controversy for nearly half a century. Canterbury assumed the original bound prescribed by Uncas and laid down by the first surveyors of Joshua's Tract. Windham maintained the true south line run by her own committee. The gore between these lines was claimed by both towns. It has been stated by many historians, even by Trumbull, usually so accurate, that "Canterbury originally belonged to Windham," but this is manifestly impossible, as the territory of Windham was restricted by the terms of the will to a line south from Appaquake, and by the orders of Uncas, who had charge of its laying out, the line was run a little west of south, following Nipmuck Path rather than the compass. The bitter and protracted contest for the land between these rival boundaries probably led to the belief that the whole territory was in conflict and that Canterbury had once belonged to Windham. In 1704, Windham appointed a committee to treat with Canterbury people respecting their bounds and not to agree with them further west than a certain specified point. Canterbury not agreeing to anything but the original line, the committee was directed, "to run a south line from Appaquake and fix boundaries," and, a few years later, proceeded to lay out the disputed land and assume its jurisdiction. The first Canterbury settlers in this vicinity were Stephen Cook, Richard and Benoni Woodward and Joseph Hide, who purchased land on Little River in 1703. Jonathan Hide and Stephen Frost soon after settled in this

section. George Lilly, who purchased land between Nipmuck Path and Little River in 1710, was claimed by Windham.

In 1707, Canterbury organized her first military company; William Johnson, ensign. In 1708, she was released from the payment of country rate to the Colony, on condition that the money due "be improved by them for the building a meeting-house in their town within one year next coming." In 1709, she gave in a list of thirty-five male inhabitants and £1,619. 10s. taxable estates.

With the aid thus afforded, Canterbury was able in time to complete her meeting house, even without the land north which had been deemed so indispensable. A house for the minister was also provided, and, in 1711, the town received liberty from the Assembly "to gather a church and call a minister to office amongst them, according to the rules of the gospel and the order of discipline established by this Government." The minister called was Mr. Samuel Estabrook, son of Rev. Joseph Estabrook, of Concord, a graduate of Harvard in 1696, who had been some years preaching in Canterbury to general acceptance. Nothing is known of the terms of settlement. "The church was constituted June 13, 1711"—Rev. Messrs. Whiting, Coit, John Woodward, of Norwich, and Salmon Treat, of Preston, officiating in the public services. The covenant adopted was more elaborate than those in the neighboring churches. No mention was made of Saybrook Platform nor any specific form of discipline indicated. The signers agreed, "to hold fast the doctrines of faith and good manners contained in the Scriptures of Truth," and "to submit to the discipline of Christ in his church . . . that the worship of God may be upheld in the power and spiritualness thereof among us." Samuel Estabrook, Eleazer Brown, Elisha Paine, Samuel Cleveland, John Woodward, Richard Woodward and Stephen Frost, signing the covenant, were recognized as the 'seven pillars' or constituent members of the church, and Mr. Estabrook ordained the same day as its pastor. Mr. Whiting gave the charge, Mr. Treat the right hand of fellowship. Eleazer Brown was soon chosen deacon. Timothy Backus, James Hyde, Josiah Cleveland, Richard Adams, Jun., Samuel Butts, Thomas Brown, with their wives, Mrs. Samuel Adams and one or two others, united with the church in 1712-13, making the whole membership twenty-five.

Having thus provided for religious worship and ordinances, the people of Canterbury devoted themselves with equal earnestness to the settlement of their secular affairs, as the various quarrels respecting bounds and land titles greatly impeded progress. Major Fitch had already moved to the Assembly for liberty to survey and settle the western boundary line, and upon further representations from Elisha



Paine and Samuel Adams—sent as deputies by Canterbury in May, 1711—of the uncomfortable state and condition of the people, “by reason of their divers claims and controversies about their lands in that town, and about their titles to the same and division thereof, and by reason that several persons there have bought and purchased of the Indians or others, one and the same parcel in many places,”—the Assembly, “being minded and willing to make a quiet, peaceable and just settlement of the said lands,” appointed William Pitkin, Esq., Messrs John Elliott, Solomon Tracy, Samuel Adams and Samuel Butts, or any three of them, to be a committee to advise and assist in stating, dividing and settling said land. Yet, with all their care, no permanent settlement was then effected. Obadiah Johnson and Samuel Adams offered to throw up to the town one third of their purchase from Owaneco, accommodating the town with minister’s lot and ministry lot, the remainder to be divided between the inhabitants, and have all surveyed and parceled out, taking advice from two or three Indians—provided this purchase was confirmed to them. The town so far accepted this offer that two hundred acres of land near the meeting-house and thirty in the west of the town were laid out to Mr. Estabrook, but no further division was accomplished for some years.

At the instigation of Major Fitch, the disputed lines between Windham and Canterbury were thoroughly investigated in 1710-11. Bushnell and Leffingwell, who had assisted in the first survey of Joshua’s Tract, both testified that they were sent by Uncas to measure eight miles south from Appaquake by Nipmuck Path, that they then understood that the land to the east of the Path was Owaneco’s, and did know that the Legatees never by all their actions nor in their viewing the lands for a patent, supposed “that they had any title on the east side of said path.” The General Assembly, after hearing their reports and testimonies, was of opinion that the original line, running from Appaquake to a white oak tree marked with the letter B, ought to be the dividing line between the towns, and therefore empowered and ordered the worshipful Matthew Allen, Esq., and Mr. John Plumb, May, 1712, “to endeavor to find out and renew the said line, and extend it to Norwich bounds and renew and refresh the same with proper marks,” but if unable to find this “antient line” they were to run and stake one, according to the description of the same and the last Will of Joshua. The committee was able to find the line and refresh it, and in May, 1713, it was confirmed by the General Assembly as the dividing line between Canterbury and Windham.

In other matters, Canterbury was equally successful. A petition was sent to the General Assembly, May 5, 1712, showing “that though

the town of Plainfield was once regularly laid out and our money paid for it, yet through some mishap, the return of the committee appointed was lost out of Court and never recorded," and also that the Justice of Plainfield had refused to swear the listers, "which, with the uncertainty of our town bounds (not being recorded), puts us out of capacity either for town or country rates;" and praying "that the town bounds might be stated and confirmed according to the former laying out by Messrs. Wetherell, Pitkin and Ely, as ordered by the General Court in 1699," and "that lysters may be sworn, that we may the better perform our respective duties, and that for time to come there may be some person empowered to administer the oath to our town officers." The Assembly, in response, granted full power unto the town-clerk of Canterbury to administer the necessary oaths required by law for town officers, and directed Mr. John Plumb, New London County surveyor, to run and settle the bounds of the town. Mr. Plumb proceeded to Canterbury and made the needful surveys, "but found *two lines* between Plainfield and Canterbury had been granted by the General Assembly, one, the Quinebaug; the other, somewhat differing, and no direction given him by which line to run, whereby he was at a loss and prayed for direction." The Assembly once more took the matter into consideration, and, notwithstanding a most earnest petition from Plainfield that the bound might extend no further west than the Quinebaug River, resolved, October, 1714:—

"That the surveyor of the County of New London, upon the motion and at the charge of the town of Canterbury, run the east bounds of the said town, viz., from the centre of the island called Peagscomsuck, a due east line one quarter of a mile, and from thence a straight line to the south bounds, to fall upon the south bounds within a mile eastward from Quinebaug River, pursuant to the agreement of the inhabitants of the east and west sides of the town of Plainfield, made on December 24, 1702, and compleat the same and make return thereof, as well as of the other lines of said town ordered to be run by the said surveyor."

Not only did Canterbury thus regain the jurisdiction of this important part of her original territory and secure the confirmation of the strip contested by Windham, but she was also enlarged by the annexation of land northward, the Assembly enacting, October, 1714, "that the tract of land between the towns of Canterbury and Plainfield should be equally divided and the southern part belong to Canterbury." Richard Adams, John Woodward, Edward Spalding and Daniel Cady, residents of this tract, were thus added to the inhabitants of Canterbury.

The settlement of the bounds was followed by an influx of population. Some, indeed, were "vagabond fellows," introduced by Major Fitch, who bought and sold land but never "bore any public charges either in church or commonwealth, not so much as one penny," but others

were men of character and position. Edward Raynesford, of Cambridge, purchased land of Jeremiah Plympton, and removed to Canterbury in 1714. James Bradford, of Norwich, and John Dyer, brother of Thomas of Windham, settled in Canterbury in 1715. The train-band company was so enlarged that Joseph Adams was made its lieutenant, and Edward Spalding ensign. Elisha Paine, Samuel Adams, Samuel Butts and Joseph and John Adams served successively as representatives to the General Court. As no justice of the peace had yet been appointed for the town, the clerk was vested with unusual powers, while Major Fitch, as magistrate, managed other public affairs.

## XXII.

### MAJOR FITCH. DIVISION OF LAND. GENERAL PROGRESS.

**M**AJOR Fitch, during these years, was unquestionably the leading citizen of Canterbury, though his pretensions and exactions involved him in frequent quarrels with his fellow-townsmen. In public and political affairs he was still very prominent, though often in collision with the government and its officials. The Mohegan land claim, by which he had gained possession of such large tracts of country, involved the Colony in great difficulty. False representations of her treatment of the Mohegans laid before the British Government, had led to a thorough investigation of the whole question, resulting in the conviction that this claim was untenable and that the land held by Fitch and Mason under it, rightfully belonged to the Colony of Connecticut. A more stringent Indian policy was now adopted. No attempt was made to take away lands already sold and appropriated, or to disturb townships previously settled, but further sales of Mohegan land and the laying out of new townships within this disputed territory were precluded as far as possible. Major Fitch entered into this contest with characteristic energy and impetuosity, aided and abetted the Masons and Dudley in their efforts to secure possession of the whole Mohegan and Pequot Country, and resolutely refused to relinquish any part of his claim. In 1707, he sold the territory afterward incorporated as the township of Ashford to several gentlemen, but the General Court refused to confirm the purchase. In 1717, he proceeded to lay out lots and make arrangements for settling a township north of Tolland, whereupon Governor Saltonstall, with advice of the Council, issued the following proclamation :—

“Feb. 19, 1717<sup>6</sup>. Whereas, I have been credibly informed that some persons, under color of the countenance and approbation of the Governor

and Company of this Colony, have presumed to lay out a certain tract of land within the same, adjoining to the town of Enfield on the west and Tolland on the south, under the denomination of a township, and have proceeded so far as to divide the tract into lots and invite inhabitants, encouraging them to make settlements there, and many may be tempted to commit great trespass upon the said land, which, of right, appertains to the said Government and Colony.

For the preventing of which mischief, I have thought good, with the advice and consent of the Council, to signify that all pretensions whatsoever of any grant of leave, labor, countenance or approbation of the Government for the settling of a township there are wholly false; that the said tract has not been granted to any person whatever, as also, that special order is taken for the prosecution of such persons as shall be found to commit any trespass."

Major Fitch, who was unwell at the time and greatly harassed by business perplexities, was thrown into such a tempest of rage by this prohibition that he entirely forgot his respect for the Government and position as a magistrate, and as if he were indeed "Lord Proprietor of the Colony," replied by the following counter proclamation:—

"The Honored James Fitch, Esq., Proprietor of a certain tract of land to the east of Enfield:—

#### A PROCLAMATION.

Whereas, I have seen fit, with ye advice of good and able counsel, to give further encouragement for the settling of a new town to the east of Enfield, by informing ye good men that hath taken up lots and are going to settle—I may first observe, That the land is certainly within the stated recorded Mohegan Sachem bounds and in ye very foundation as to property of Woodstock, Pomfret and several other towns, and hath for more than forty years been owned in both Governments; by our General Assembly in times of Governors Leet and Treat, who acknowledged the natives' rights to be good: 3, the stated recorded Sachem east, west, north and south bounds—approved in England by her Majesty's attorney-general and ye return of ye Lords ye commissioners, attested copies out of England I have by me—it not appearing to them that the land claimed by the natives was intended to pass to ye Corporation of ye English Colony of Connecticut, or that it was intended to dispossess ye Indians or proper natives, who before and after the grant were the possessors of the land.

I add not here, in that I have been persuaded to make public at large the which here I only give hints of; as, also, ye heads of three noble pleas in England to prove native rights in America, that neither King nor Parliament can take it from them without agreement or their consent, &c.

As to a kind of proclamation lately come forth from the Honorable Governor and Council in February last, I had thought to have taken it to pieces, and I think I could have done it and cut it into as many pieces as the Protestants did the Popish wooden god, but on second thought hope to have an opportunity ye next General Assembly to lay this and other law cases before them, in order to bring it orderly before King and Council if occasion requires.

ENFIELD, *March 22, 1717.*

God save the King and Colony of Connecticut from self-designing and self-seeking men."

Upon the publication of this most insolent manifesto, a warrant was issued, summoning Major Fitch to appear before Richard Christopher, of New London, assistant, and answer for its "false and seditious expressions," but he—"lame and not able to ride"—refused to obey, and sent the following missive:—

"To Mr. Richard Christopher:

Last March, you sent the sheriff with a great and special warrant to



seize me body and bones and bring me before yourself as if I had been a felon, whereupon I presume to offer some Canterbury notions.

1. Warrant not legal under Charter Government.

2. Not customary, a signification to any person that hath been in respect and interest, must be seized body and bones, *Ipse facto*, in a moment, carried away—say they—it hath not been heard in this Colony.

3. Say they, where is ye complainer or why not bonds given? Some will plainly talk as that I might cause *you* to be so served, sent to Fairfield; with some other idle discourse.

But now, worshipful, to say two or three words—if not too much boldness for a very little person under any circumstances to offer a word of advice, it should be thus: Call in your warrant—be it as it will, and to one constable send a summons for me to appear before ye next Gen. Assembly and I will appear and answer, if God gives me life and health; or by my attornies, men of brain, and purses to manage it in both England [and America], and then I will promise to send or give the *Hon. Council in New London* a copy of my complaint. I can only add, that being informed by ye sheriff you were going to Boston, I was unwilling to hazard my life and health and you not at home—and if speedy banishment or imprisonment be designed, whether three or four bondmen may not prevent it at present. In these two things pray inform me, and it will oblige him who hath and will love and esteem you—though I suppose I have suffered more under your administration than any one in the country—a friend to law, justice and peace, ye defender of law. Do as you would be done unto, then I will be your real friend,

JAMES FITCH.

CANTERBURY, April 24, 1717.

Sir. If anything amiss in these lines, pray ascribe it to ye great pain I am in my leg, pray excuse me this time."

In a private letter to Governor Saltonstall, Major Fitch complained most bitterly of the treatment he had received in two especial particulars; first, that the Governor had himself inquired about the new plantation east of Enfield, received report of its progress and "made not a word of objection;" secondly, in that he had so largely improved his own political influence for the governor's re-election—"for had I let you out of my hands, know assuredly yourself and Mr. Christophers had been next year at liberty." Had the Governor sent him a few lines with "ye reason" there had been no need of a proclamation which had turned some of his friends. Many objected that a *Council* should take on them to judge men's betters and charge them with falseness, and they having no notice, nor time, nor opportunity to speak for themselves. Many were strongly dissatisfied with the Council in New London, but he had done, and would do, all that he could to still the clamor. Had he been in health, he had intended to have waited upon his Honor, but now a "stroke of New London authority" would force him down as if he were guilty of treason. With regard to certain public measures—if the Governor would say in two lines to him that, on further consideration, he supposed plantation work should not be hindered if it appear at the General Court that Major Fitch hath a right as to property . . . then he would make things as easy as he could; if not, let them run. He humbly desired the Governor or Mr. Christophers to send him a few lines; if not, he should take the best advice he could, up and down.

No answer was apparently vouchsafed to these communications. At the General Assembly, May 19, 1717, a complaint was laid against Major James Fitch "of slighting, contemning and contemptuously contriving to abuse and ridicule" a proclamation issued by the Governor, and of publishing "a proclamation, wherein are contained false, scandalous, abusive, undutiful and contemptuous expressions," whereupon—"upon consideration that when the sheriff was sent to arrest Major Fitch, he was lame and not able to ride"—ordered:—

"That a messenger be sent express with a warrant, signed by the secretary, to arrest the said Fitch and have him before the Assembly now sitting, to be dealt with as the law directs, and that the pretence of lameness shall not be allowed of or hinder the execution of said writ but what is approved to be a sufficient obstruction to travelling by some known surgeon, or, in want of such, by other or judicious person as can be found."

This requisition was passed in the Upper House but dissented from in the Lower. Committees of conference were appointed, but before any decision had been reached a message was received from the offender. The impulsive major, left to his own meditations, had been led to see the impropriety of his conduct, and thus acknowledged it to the Assembly:—

"Whereas, I did very precipitately and indiscreetly at Enfield, write, give out and publish an advertisement in the form of a proclamation, containing several unsuitable expressions and reflections upon the Government, and matters and things appearing to me now with another face than at that time when I labored under great temptations, do now freely confess that I have in so doing acted very indiscreetly and disrespectfully, and am heartily sorry and condemn myself therefor and ask forgiveness of his Honor and of this Honorable Assembly, promising that for the future I will maintain a good circum-spection and carry a better deportment, and if it shall please you to grant my prayer herein will lay me under great and lasting obligations.

May 27, 1717.'

The Upper House, after hearing this confession, proposed to impose a fine of twenty pounds, "which fine, for so high a misdemeanor, was reduced to so low a sum in consideration of Major Fitch's humble acknowledgment." The Lower House, "having considered the full and ingenuous acknowledgment," voted "the confession sufficient," and both Houses finally concurred in an unconditional discharge.

Major Fitch, with all his faults, was an ardent patriot, a firm friend of popular liberty, contending "as strenuously against Governor Saltonstall and the Council for the rights and privileges of the Lower House" as he did thirty years earlier against the encroachments of Andross, nor did he allow his personal feelings and prejudices to hinder him from promoting what he deemed the public good. He was a friend of progress, ready to initiate and carry on public improvements; a friend of education, endowing Yale College in 1701 with over six hundred acres of land, in what was afterward Killingly, and furnishing glass and nails for the first college edifice in New Haven.

In private life, Major Fitch was genial, generous, hospitable, agreeable in manners and conversation, but somewhat over-convivial in his habits, so that he was sometimes compelled to make confessions to the *Church*, as well as to the State. In spite of censures and occasional suspension from communion, he retained through life his connection with the church of Norwich, though ever ready to do his part in sustaining public worship at Canterbury. The homestead at Peagscomsuck was long a noted business and social centre. Of his numerous sons, only Daniel and Jabez remained in Canterbury. His daughter Abigail, married in 1715 to John Dyer, and Jerusha, married to Daniel Bissel, also resided in Canterbury.

The declining years of Major Fitch were embittered by personal and political controversies and pecuniary embarrassment. His large possessions were of little real value to him. A tract of land, four miles square, in Ashford, and another, two miles square, in the southwest of Pomfret, were early taken from him by Solomon Stoddard, of Boston, "on execution of judgment for debt." Other large tracts were sold for a trifle; the Government refused to confirm the sale of others, and he was more than once obliged to put his Peagscomsuck establishment out of his hands to save it from creditors. Owaneco, the former sachem of Wabbaquasset, the claimant of Mamosqueag and the Quinebaug Country, once so courted and flattered by the foremost men of the Colony, was in his later years a drunken vagabond, roaming about the country with his squaw and praying for charity in the following doggerel, written for him by Richard Bushnell:—

"Oneco, King, his queen doth bring  
To beg a little food.  
As they go along, their friends among,  
To try how kind, how good.  
  
Some pork, some beef, for their relief;  
And if you can't spare bread  
She'll thank you for pudding as they go a gooding,  
And carry it on her head."

Owaneco died, it is believed, in 1715, and his son, Cæsar, succeeded him as "Prince and Sachem of Mohegan."

In 1718, Canterbury resumed her efforts to secure a more regular and orderly division of the land within her borders. In making these new arrangements, a book was ordered for the selectmen and town acts and proceedings were thenceforth duly recorded. Its first report of town-meeting was on December 10, 1717, more than fourteen years after town organization. John Woodward was chosen moderator; Samuel Adams, constable; Joseph Adams, town-clerk and first selectman; Edward Spalding, second selectman; Elisha Paine, third; Samuel Butt, fourth; Henry Smith, fifth. John Woodward and

Solomon Tracy were elected grand-jurors; Samuel Spalding and John Ensworth, fence-viewers; John Dyer and Edward Raynsford, listers. Paul Davenport was surveyor; Deliverance Brown, collector; Robert Green, pound-keeper; Richard Pellet, tavern-keeper. William Baker was made responsible "for decency of meeting-house." It was voted, "That the act made for the killing of rattlesnakes, April 24, 1716, should stand in force the present year;" also, "That a highway be laid out, from the country road that leads to Norwich to the country road that leads to Windham." March 4, 1718, the town ordered, "that there should be a school kept in this town six months, viz., two months at y<sup>e</sup> upper end of y<sup>e</sup> town and two months in y<sup>e</sup> west row and two months at the lower end, at one place or more as either party shall agree." In 1719, the selectmen were empowered "to be a committee to get y<sup>e</sup> meeting-house glazed at the town's charge." A committee of three was also appointed, "to view the country road from Norwich line to y<sup>e</sup> upper end of this town, and to renew the bounds and monymets of said roade and to make their return to said town by the first of April next, with y<sup>e</sup> point of compass from bound to bound, at y<sup>e</sup> town's charge." It was voted, "That those persons y<sup>t</sup> had served y<sup>e</sup> town in laying out highways or perambulating y<sup>e</sup> town's bounds in times past that had not been paid, and for time to come y<sup>e</sup> towne on y<sup>e</sup> like occasions, shall have two and six-pence per day and no more. Sheep were permitted to go on the commons without a keeper, and a rate of a half-penny upon the pound allowed for the relief of John Jones, now under the doctor's hands."

The settlement of the land was achieved with much labor and difficulty. As a preliminary step, it was voted, June 25, 1718, "That all the inhabitants that were settled in this town in the year 1712, that have purchased any land of the natives or of any other person, their purchase not exceeding three hundred acres, shall have a confirmation of their lands as mentioned in their deeds—except such inhabitants which deeds or grants Enterfear on each other. Also, those claiming above three and under five hundred acres, provided they quit the right in the rest of land belonging to town. Same privilege granted to inhabitants of north addition." The selectmen were greatly impeded in their efforts by what they styled "a wicked, pretended deed of nine hundred and sixty acres," claimed by "honest Solomon and Daniel Tracy, who, when public charges were laid upon out-lands, were so wise as to claim none, but now cannot live without they can ruin seven or eight families and raze the foundations of the town." Whether they succeeded in establishing their claim is not apparent. A large number of the inhabitants received confirmation of their lands from the town authorities.



After laboring for five years to bring affairs into order, the town voted in January, 1723 :—

“Whereas, there is a considerable quantity of land in said town, known by ye name of ye Thirds, which land was formerly given by deed to said town by Messrs. Samuel Adams and Obadiah Johnson, in consideration of ye town granting to said Adams and Johnson the other two-thirds of their purchase; the above two-thirds some do profess to lay claim unto within ye town, which ye town in general not approving of, but after searching ye records and considering ye matter, do pass a vote that it shall remain to ye town in general and that it shall be divided according as ye town shall agree hereafter.”

This proposal to take away land that had long been allowed to them was at first earnestly opposed by Messrs. Adams and Johnson and others to whom they had sold lands, “because they had disposed of it already to particular persons,” but after further discussion an amicable settlement was effected, and on February 26, 1723, “the proprietary inhabitants convened together, in order to a regular settling of our properties and proportionating to each proprietor inhabitant his proportion in our undivided lands or commons.” It was agreed and voted :—

“That those who were settled inhabitation and paid to ye building of ye meeting-house and minister's home shall have one share and one half-share in said undivided land; those who were settled when our patent was given and paid rates in ye town to have one share in said undivided lands, and those who settled since ye patent was given and now live within ye bounds of our patent to have a half-share. It is to be understood that none shall accrue any right by this vote but such as are now settled within ye bounds of our patent, neither those that have granted these rights to their individual lands to ye town, and also, that there shall be no advantage taken by this vote to hinder us from granting any lands in a general way.”

Edward Raynsford and Elisha Paine immediately entered their protest against this vote, “as it belonged to those proprietary inhabitants established by the patent of 1710, and not to the town in general town-meeting to make division and dispossession of land and to admit proprietors.” No others objecting, a committee was chosen to search the list and apportion the divisions according to the town vote. This arrangement was carried out to general satisfaction and on April 30, 1723, the long-contested Canterbury land was equally distributed. Those who received one and a half shares as first settlers and planters were Major Fitch, Elisha Paine, John Pike, Thomas Brown, John Adams, Samuel Adams, Sen., Samuel Cleveland, Sen. and Jun., Robert Burwell, Richard Pellet, Robert Green, Joseph and Obadiah Johnson, Richard Woodward, Stephen Frost, David Munrow, William and Timothy Backus, Benjamin Baldwin, Tixhall Ensworth, Samuel and Henry Adams, Jun., Joseph Adams, Solomon Tracy, Samuel Butt, Joseph Smith and Joseph Cleveland,—twenty-seven in all. Lieut. Edward Spalding, John Welch, Edward Cleveland, Jun., Richard Smith, James Bradford, Ephraim Davis, David Raynsford, Nathaniel Bond, Henry Adams, Sen., David Adams, Deliverance Brown, Thomas

Adams, Benjamin Fasset, Abraham Paine, Elisha Paine, Jun., Daniel Fitch, James Hyde, John Port, John Dyer, Moses Cleveland, John Ensworth, John Cady and John Carter received each one share as proprietors under the patent. The later settlers, who had but a half-share, were David Carver, Thomas Davenport, Joseph Adams, Sen., Solomon Paine, Henry Cleveland, Theophilus Fitch, John Bacon, Jonathan Davis, Jacob Johnson, John Baldwin, Isaac Cleveland, Edward Raynsford, Joseph Ensworth, Richard Gale, Jabez Fitch, Nathaniel Robbins, Aaron Cady and Samuel Cook. The whole number of land-proprietors in the township was thus sixty-eight—of whom some eight or ten were non-resident. Many of the later proprietors were sons of the first planters. John Bacon of Norwich bought land west side of Rowland Brook of Timothy Backus in 1720. Samuel Parish, Sen., bought land and settled in the west of Canterbury in 1724.

From the scantiness of public records, little can be gathered of the progress of the town. In 1720, a full military company was organized with Joseph Adams for captain, Edward Spalding for lieutenant and Daniel Carue for ensign. Captain Adams was now one of the leading men of the town, chosen every year as deputy and in 1724 was appointed a justice of the peace. Schools received considerable attention, though as yet no school-houses were provided. A school-master was employed to perambulate the town, teaching "one month at y<sup>e</sup> Widow Ensworth's; one month at John Fitch's; one at Deliverance Brown's; one at Nathaniel Bond's and one at David Adams's." Twenty shillings a month were allowed out of the school money and if a suitable person could not be procured for that price, those who sent their children were to pay their proportion of "over-plush." In 1726, the town was arranged in three sections, "a school to be kept three months in each squadron." A committee was appointed to lay out highways where they were wanting, and two additional pounds instituted. A burying-cloth of black broadcloth was also provided at the town's charge.

The unwillingness of Plainfield to relinquish any land east of the Quinebaug and the resultant irregularities and disorders have been already detailed. In the border warfare maintained for so many years between the sister townships, Canterbury bore her full share. Her citizens were frequently called to account for hay and grain forcibly carried off and other acts of aggression and retaliation. Nor were her settlers always at peace among themselves or obedient to the wholesome laws of the Colony. Even such prominent men and active church members as Elisha Paine and Obadiah Johnson were not exemplary in behavior, the latter complaining, "That Paine had struck him with a club, knocked him down and thrown a hatchet at him." The

complaint was not sustained and Paine recovered cost of prosecution. Paul Davenport was also unable to procure the conviction of Samuel Ashley "for saying that he did say that the said Ashley was drunk at an Indian house." It is said that the same Davenport had much authority over the Indians and when they became too uproarious with drink in their camp-ground near his dwelling, he would march in among them with his cane and beat them into quiet. If himself obliged to break the laws of the land he was willing to pay the penalty, as is evident from his appearing voluntarily before the Court at New London and "acknowledging himself guilty of a breach of the law by riding from Providence to Canterbury on the Sabbath-day, paid the fine of twenty shillings."

The church of Canterbury was harmonious and prosperous, though its membership increased less rapidly than in adjoining towns, owing probably to the disreputable character of some of its early inhabitants,—the "vagabond fellows," who would bear no public charges. The influence of the religious revival in Windham in 1721, extended to Canterbury, so that Elisha and Solomon, sons of Elisha Paine, Sen., and many other young people, were brought into the church, and its membership doubled within a few years. Mr. Estabrook was a man of wisdom and learning and much respected throughout the Colony. The annual Election Sermon was preached by him in 1718. After the death of Deacon Eleazer Brown in 1720, Timothy Backus and Thomas Brown were appointed deacons. Strict discipline was maintained in the church, as was manifested by the following votes and resolutions: March 8, 1715, "The church of Canterbury being under fears and suspicious that those of us that have borne office in the town and have been under oath, have been negligent in the execution of their office and discharge of their oath, we do in pursuance of the sixth article of our covenant: resolve—That if any one of us are or shall be chosen into any civil office and take oath for the execution of said office, that we will do our utmost endeavor faithfully to execute the offices our oaths oblige us to and to improve the power we are invested with for the suppression of sin and the promotion of religion." It was also voted in 1717, "That no complaint shall be brought to open hearing in the church unless it be committed to writing and signed by the complainor, provided this act shall not be construed to hinder the Pastor's attending gospel order in inquiring into misdemeanors when there is no complaint, or of particular brethren's informing of scandals y<sup>e</sup> do not particularly concern themselves." In 1718, it was decided "that all baptized persons were under the watch of the church and that it had power to deal with such in case they offend."

There is no evidence that the malignant distemper which so heavily

afflicted Plainfield in 1725-26, extended to Canterbury—but one special case of suffering is reported, so severe as to call relief from the General Assembly. Anna the wife of Gershom Matt—apparently a transient resident—after the birth of triplets, “which through God’s mercy were all living,” languished long under distressing and expensive sickness; pleurisy, dropsy and a dangerous imposthume, successively, seizing on her; her infants, meanwhile, out at nurse, at a great expense; and lastly her husband was attacked by sore sickness and “brought very low and nigh the dust of death;” by which series of adverse providences they were reduced to great want and straits, and petitioned that a brief, craving the contribution and charity of good people in such towns as should be deemed meet, might be granted for their relief in this distress—a mode of relief not uncommon before the days of newspapers. The Governor and Council in New Haven, October 16, 1725, thereupon,—

“Ordered, That a brief be therefore granted, and that it be directed, and it is hereby granted and directed to pass into and through the towns and respective congregations in New London, Groton, Stonington, Preston, Norwich, Lebanon, Canterbury, Plainfield, Pomfret, and Killingly for the end aforesaid; and that the money collected by said brief be transmitted to the Reverend Mr. Samuel Estabrook of said Canterbury and by him delivered for the relief of the said poor distressed family.”

### XXIII.

#### ASPINOCK. KILLINGLY.

THE township next following Canterbury in date of organization was Killingly, laid out north of Plainfield in 1708, in the northeast corner of Connecticut, in the wild border land between the Quinebaug and Rhode Island. This region was early known to the whites as the Whetstone Country, but long left neglected. Rough hill ranges, alternating with marshes and sand-flats, offered poor inducements to purchasers and settlers. It lay remote from any public thoroughfare of travel, and its settlement would probably have been delayed still later had it depended merely upon individual fancy or selection. But the Whetstone Country, though sterile and unattractive, had one great advantage. It was owned by the Colony of Connecticut and not by individuals or corporations. While Mohegan land-claims had swallowed up a great portion of Windham County territory, this northern section east of the Quinebaug was at the disposal of the Government. The wild Whetstone Country was thus, after a time, cherished and protected



and brought as soon as possible into notice and market. The land, if poor, was good enough to give away, or pay to creditors, and many civil and military services were requited by grants of land in this region. Its first white proprietors were thus the leading men in the Colony. Governors Haynes, Treat and Saltonstall; Majors Fitch and Mansfield; the Reverend Messrs. Hooker, Pierpont, Whiting, Buckingham, Andrews, Noyes, Woodbridge and Russel; the Hon. Giles Hamlin, Matthew Allen and Caleb Stanley, had grants of land in the northeast corner of Connecticut and were associated with the early history of Killingly. The grant to Governor Haynes was given as early as 1642; that to the Rev. John Whiting in 1662, but the greater number at a later period. No particular spot or bounds were designated in these grants, which simply allowed a certain number of acres to be taken up, "without any prejudice to any particular township or former grant." The land "was all before them where to choose," and the first comers chose the best localities. Measurements were in all cases extremely liberal.

The first to take possession of land in the Whetstone Country under these grants, were those notorious "land-grabbers," Major James Fitch and Captain John Chandler. A grant of "fifteen hundred acres, to be taken up together and lying beyond New Roxbury, near the northeast corner of the Colony line," was confirmed to Major Fitch by the General Court, October, 1690, who, with his usual dispatch and discrimination, at once selected and had laid out to him the best land in the whole section, viz.: the interval between the Quinebaug and Assawaga, extending from their junction at Acquunk to Lake Mashapaug, and also the valley east of the Assawaga, as far north as Whetstone Brook. Captain John Chandler, of Woodstock, was next in the field, buying up land granted to soldiers for services in the Narraganset War as indemnity for losses. Two hundred acres, purchased by him from Lieutenant Hollister, were laid out at Nashaway, the point of land between the Quinebaug and French Rivers, and confirmed to him by the General Court in 1691. A great part of the valley land adjoining French River and a commanding eminence two miles east of the Quinebaug, then known as Rattlesnake and afterwards as Killingly Hill, were speedily appropriated by Captain Chandler. The other grantees, less familiar with the country and less experienced in land-grabbing, found more difficulty in taking up their grants. The land was savage, remote and difficult of access. Roads and conveyances were both lacking. Wild streams, deep marshes and tangled forests impeded exploration. Surveyors were scarce, costly and not always capable of wise selection. Indians were numerous and now somewhat turbulent and refractory. The Rev. Samuel Andrews

succeeded in obtaining the laying out of his grant of two hundred acres in 1692—west of Rattlesnake Hill, “bounded three sides by wilderness.”

In 1693, the future Killingly received its first known white settler—Richard Evans—who purchased, for twenty pounds, a two-hundred-acre grant of the Rev. James Pierpont, of New Haven, and is described in the deed as “late of Rehoboth, but now resident of the said granted premises.” Little is known of this first settler of Killingly beyond the fact of his early settlement. The bounds of his farm cannot now be identified. It was laid out in the wilderness, about a mile east of the Quinebaug and three miles from Woodstock, just south of Woodward’s and Saffery’s line. It was in the northern extremity of the subsequent township of Killingly; was afterwards included in the “South Neighborhood” of Thompson, and now forms a part of the town of Putnam. Mr. Evans was accompanied by a grown son, Richard Evans, Jun., and in time built two homesteads and made various improvements. His establishment served as a landmark for all the surrounding region, many tracts of land being identified by distance or direction from Richard Evans.

In 1694, the Rev. Noadiah Russel selected and secured two hundred acres, “five miles southeast from Woodstock, east of the Quinebaug; lands that bound it, not taken up.” Seventeen hundred acres, scattered about “on Five-Mile River, southeast from Richard Evans,” were confirmed to James Fitch, Moses Mansfield, Rev. Mr. Buckingham and Samuel Rogers, in 1695. This was “the wild land in Killingly” granted by Major Fitch to Yale College. The Indian troubles following after this date checked further land operations in the Whetstone Country. For several years no sales or surveys are reported, and Richard Evans remained apparently its sole white inhabitant till the close of the century.

With the return of peace, business and speculation revived. In 1699, the Rev. Noadiah Russel sold his two hundred acres, “east side of Quinebaug, *alias* Aspinock River, according to the Indian name,” to Peter and Nathaniel Aspinwall, Samuel Perrin and Benjamin Griggs, all of Woodstock, for twenty pounds. This valley of the Quinebaug, extending from the Great Falls, now in Putnam, to Lake Mashapaug, and known as Aspinock, had now attracted the attention of Woodstock’s business men. Turpentine was gathered here in large quantities from its numerous pine trees by that noted trader, James Corbin. James and Joseph, sons of John Leavens, were thus employed by him in 1700. The younger brother, Joseph, on one occasion strayed off alone, and while felling a tree was suddenly attacked and wounded in the thumb by one of the original proprietors of the soil—a venomous rattlesnake.

No help was near, the young man was in imminent danger, but with great coolness and presence of mind he hacked off the bitten thumb with his axe and then dispatched his assailant. His very peculiar chirography corroborates the truth of this legend, as also the *sobriquet*, "Old One Thumb," afterwards given him by the Indians.

Despite this mishap, the young Leavens brothers decided to settle in Aspinock. They were joined, and perhaps preceded, by our old friend Peter Aspinwall, who had been employed by the Woodstock authorities in 1691, "to lay out a road to the Quinebaug, where it may be most convenient to make a bridge and lay out a road to Providence." He laid the road between the Quinebaug and Mill Rivers to a point just below the Great Falls, which he deemed a convenient place for fording or bridging, and thence southeasterly, winding around the base of Rattlesnake Hill. While engaged in this arduous work, Lieutenant Aspinwall took up his residence in the vicinity of the Falls, and was greatly hindered and burdened helping travelers across the river. Communication between Woodstock and Providence was greatly facilitated by the opening of this way, and also that between Hartford and Boston, many travelers preferring it to the old Connecticut road through Woodstock. In 1703, Lieutenant Aspinwall represented to the General Assembly, "That for a long time the want of a bridge over the Quinebaug, in or near the road to Boston, has been a grievous burden and affliction, as well to travelers as to the complainant, who lives on the east side; not being always fordable, exceedingly high and swift"—and offered to build a bridge and take care of it for one hundred and fifty acres of land. This good offer was accepted by the Upper House but refused by the Lower, so that the Quinebaug was left unbridged for twenty years.

Lieutenant Aspinwall then removed his residence to his Russel purchase, south of the Providence road, a mile southeast of the Falls, and devoted his energies to the settlement of Aspinock. In 1703, he purchased of Caleb Stanley two hundred acres of land abutting south on Mashapaug Lake. The land adjoining it westward and extending to the Quinebaug was laid out to Thomas Buckingham, and sold by him to Captain John Sabin, of Mashamoquet, whose daughter Judith married young Joseph Leavens, and received this beautiful valley farm as her marriage portion. James and Peter Leavens bought up land grants and also settled in this vicinity. Other settlers soon followed Aspinwall and the Leavenses. Jonathan Eaton purchased land between the Quinebaug and Mill Rivers, on the Woodstock road, in 1703, and was the first permanent inhabitant of what is now Putnam village. James, Daniel and Nicholas Cady of Groton, Massachusetts, removed to the valley of the Quinebaug about 1704, buying land of Chandler

and Andrews. In 1704, John Allen of Marlborough, a gentleman somewhat advanced in life, of ample means, with sons to settle, purchased the Stanley farm of Peter Aspinwall, and there put up "a tenement of housing and other accommodations." These several settlers were the pioneers and planters of Killingly, settled on or near the Quinebaug, mostly between the Falls and Mashapaug Lake, styling themselves in their various land-deeds "inhabitants of a place called Aspinock," three, four and five miles from Woodstock. Most of them were young men, full of life and energy. Lieutenant Aspinwall was the leading spirit of the settlement, often employed by the Colony in surveys and public services. In 1704, he was appointed ranger of the woods in eastern Connecticut and commanded various military expeditions. Large numbers of the Nipmuck Indians still frequented their ancient haunts and were in the main peaceable and friendly but troublesome and extortionate, roving about in large companies and demanding food and lodging from the settlers.

With the erection of a settlement, land traffic became more lively. Grants were laid out and quickly taken up by purchasers, at prices ranging from twenty pounds to "three hors and one kine." A thousand acres to the heirs of Governor Haynes, three hundred to the heirs of Joseph Haynes and three hundred to Robert Treat were "pitched upon" by Captain Chandler in 1707, and laid out by John Prents. Giles Hamlin's grant was sold to John Allen and laid out at Pottaquatic, on the then northern boundary of Connecticut. Rattlesnake Hill was also purchased by John Allen of Captain Chandler. James Leavens bought much land in various localities and set up a sawmill on the Assawaga, near the Rhode Island line. Richard Evans, the first settler, had now two houses on his plantation, with orchards, tannery pits and a fulling-mill. "Grinding" and other supplies needful for these "Borderers" were procured in Woodstock.

The first settler south of Lake Mashapaug was James Danielson of Block Island, who, in 1707, purchased of Major Fitch "the neck of land" between the Quinebaug and Assawaga Rivers, for a hundred and seventy pounds. The high price of this land shows that its value was then appreciated. Mr. Danielson had served in the Narraganset war, and his name appears on the list of officers and soldiers who received the township of Voluntown in recompense for their services. Tradition tells us that he passed through the Whetstone Country on an expedition against the Nipmucks, and stopping to rest his company on the interval between the rivers, was so pleased with the locality that he then declared, that when the war was ended he should settle there. Nothing more is known of him till thirty years later, when he buys the land from the junction of the rivers, "extending up stream to the middle



of the long interval." Tradition adds, that he first traded with the natives, receiving for a trifle all that he could see from the top of a high tree, but found that Major Fitch had forestalled him. Mr. Danielson at once took possession of his purchase, built a garrison house near its southern extremity and was soon known as one of the most prominent men in the new settlement. No other settler appeared for some years in his vicinity. The land south from Acquiunk was held by Plainfield proprietors under their purchase from Owaneco, and no attempt was made for many years to bring it into market.

Though the number of inhabitants in Aspinock and its vicinity was still small, their remoteness from the seat of Government and independent mode of settlement made town organization very needful. No band of proprietors was there to manage and dispose of land, and the numerous deeds of transfer had to be recorded in Hartford, Plainfield and Canterbury. The need of proper public officers was also imperative, and in May, 1708, town organization was thus allowed and inaugurated:—

"This Assembly grants a township to the eastward of Woodstock and a patent thereof; the bounds whereof to be northerly on the line of the Massachusetts Province (it being by estimation about) five miles from the line between this Colony and the Colony of Rhode Island and the river called Assawaug; easterly on the said line between the said Colonies; southerly, partly on the northern boundary of Plainfield and partly on a line to be continued east from the northeast corner bounds of Plainfield to the said line between the said Colonies; the said northern boundary of Plainfield being settled by order of the General Court, May the 11th, 1699, and westerly on the aforesaid river; the said township being by estimation about eight or nine miles in length and five or six miles in breadth, be the same more or less.

*Always provided.* That no person now inhabiting on said land, or any other persons dwelling without this Colony who have purchased any lands within the said township, that shall not give due obedience to all the laws of this Colony for the upholding the worship of God and paying of all public charges, shall have no benefit by this act. And provided, also, that no township, nor any persons who have heretofore had any lands lying within the said township granted to him and legally laid out, shall be any ways prejudiced by this act nor any part thereof. And this Assembly desires the Hon<sup>ble</sup> Governor to commissionate Lt. Aspinwall, or some other suitable person, to train and command the soldiers in the said township, and to give a name to the said town, and also appoint the figure of a brand for their horses. It is also desired that the Hon<sup>ble</sup> Governor, Major Fitch, and Mr. Richard Christophers, or any two of them, shall give advice and direction for the calling and settling of a minister in the said town as need shall require.

And this Assembly grants to the Governor two hundred acres of land within the said township.

And it is also provided, that what country lands lye within the aforesaid tract granted to be a township not already laid out, those that have country grants have liberty to take them up, provided they do it within one year next coming.

Captain John Chandler is appointed to bound out the said lands.

And this Assembly leaves it to the Hon<sup>ble</sup> the Governor, with the Secretary, to sign a patent unto Col. Robert Treat, Major James Fitch, Capt. Dau. Wetherell, Mr. Joseph Haynes, Mr. Samuel Andrew, Mr. George Denison, Mr. James Danielson, David Jacobs, Samuel Randall, Peter Aspinwall, Joseph Cady, in behalf of the rest of the proprietors; provided it wrong no person or persons' just and legal rights."

The stringent provision for securing obedience to the Colony laws for upholding the worship of God, was called out by the movement then in progress for remedying defects in the discipline of the churches of Connecticut and securing a firmer religious establishment—this very Assembly requiring the ministers and managers to meet in Saybrook “to draw a form of ecclesiastic discipline.”

No report of the organization of town government is preserved, nor is there any record of town acts the first twenty years of its existence. Selectmen were duly appointed and discharged the duties of their offices. Books were procured for recording land-deeds—David Church serving as town-clerk. Joseph Cady was chosen lieutenant and John Winter ensign of the soldiers or train-band, and at the suggestion of some *unsuitable* person the graceful Indian Aspinock was exchanged for barbarous Killingly. In October of 1708, the Court granted “liberty to the inhabitants of Killingly, to survey and lay out one hundred acres of land within their township for the use and encouragement of a minister to settle there and carry on the worship of God among them.” A hundred acres of land for the first settled minister was also pledged to the town by Captain Chandler, in presence and with concurrence of the selectmen.

The growth of the new town was very rapid despite its poverty and remoteness. Land was cheap and open to purchasers. Grantees hastened to take up their rights and sell them out to settlers, so that population increased much more rapidly than in the richer neighboring towns owned by corporations and large land-holders. The land north of Danielson’s, extending from the middle of “the long interval” to Lake Mashapaug, was conveyed by Major Fitch to John, Nathaniel and Nicholas Mighill; a farm east of the lake was sold to John Lorton; David Church of Marlborough, and William Moffat settled in the Quinebaug valley, adjoining James Leavens. Many grants were bought up by Nicholas Cady north of Rattlesnake Hill, in the neighborhood of Richard Evans, and sold by him to George Blanchard of Lexington, Thomas Whitmore, William Price, John and Samuel Winter, John Bartlett, William Robinson and others, who at once took possession of this northern extremity of the town. So near were they to the mystical Woodward’s and Saffery’s Line, that they often ran over it into the territory of Massachusetts, and Captain Sampson Howe, who settled at Nashaway in 1708, though clearly beyond the limits of Connecticut, was ranked among the inhabitants of Killingly. Far in the east, northeast of Rattlesnake—then known as Killingly—Hill, a settlement was begun by Isaac Cutler and his son Jonathan of Cambridge, who purchased of James Leavens, in 1709, land on a brook running into the Assawaga, with a dwelling-house and part of a saw-mill.

Within the time allotted, the grantees had taken up their land, and on October 13, 1709, on the payment of forty pounds through Captain Chandler, a patent of the remaining lands in Killingly was granted by the Governor and Company of Connecticut to its proprietors, viz.: Colonel Robert Treat, Major James Fitch, Captain John Chandler, Joseph Otis, James Danielson, Ephraim Warren, Peter Aspinwall, Joseph Cady, Richard Evans, Sen. and Jun., John Winter, Stephen Clap, John and William Crawford, George Blanchard, Thomas Whitmore, John Lorton, Jonathan Russel, Daniel Cady, William Price, William Moffat, James and Joseph Leavens, John, Nathaniel and Nicholas Mighill, John Bartlett, Samuel Winter, Ebenezer Kee, Isaac and Jonathan Cutler, Peter Leavens, Sampson Howe, John Sabin, John Preston, Philip Eastman, David Church, Thomas Priest, Nicholas Cady, John, Thomas, Matthew, Jabez and Isaac Allen. Nearly one-third of these forty-four patentees were non-resident, so that Killingly numbered at this date about thirty families.

## XXIV.

### LAND-TAX. CHESTNUT HILL. CHURCH ORGANIZATION. SOUTH KILLINGLY SETTLEMENT.

**K**ILLINGLY was thus in 1709, an organized township, owning its land and enjoying to an unusual degree the favor and protection of the Government. Only a small part of its large territory was yet occupied. Its inhabitants were mostly gathered within the Quinebaug valley and in the open country north of Killingly Hill. "A gangway" leading from Plainfield to Boston extended through the whole length of the town, connecting by a cross road with the ways to Hartford and Woodstock at the fording-place below the Great Falls of the Quinebaug. Its condition may be inferred from the tradition, that when James Danielson's negro was sent to Boston with a load of produce, he had made so little progress after a day's journey as to go home to spend the first night. The Providence way after encircling the base of Killingly Hill wound back far to the north, past Isaac Cutler's, enabling the inhabitants to procure boards from his sawmill and helping build up that remote section. Mr. Cutler was early allowed to keep a house of public entertainment and his tavern was noted as the last land-mark of civilization on the road from Connecticut to Providence. Other parts of the town were only accommodated with rude bridle paths. A grist-mill was set up by James Danielson and supplied such inhabitants

as were remote from Woodstock. Several of the settlers were members of the Woodstock church and many frequented its house of worship but were so remiss in paying their dues that a committee was ordered to report their failure to the Government of Connecticut.

One of the first objects of the town, was to settle religious ordinances among themselves—manifested by “the humble request of Lieutenant Peter Aspinwall in behalf of the inhabitants of Killingly to the General Court convened at New Haven, October 12, 1710, showing:—

That whereas said town having been legally convened did pass a vote, That the non-residents of said town should bear a proportion in a tax laid, or to be laid, of fifteen shillings on the hundred acres of all the divided lands throughout said town for the building a meeting-house, a minister's house and for settling a minister—the inhabitants humbly move that the General Assembly would pass their sanction on this vote, which will be a lightening of their burdens and no urgent imposition on the non-residents. Thus in humble confidence of your favor in passing your order with respect to the premises ever imploring the divine blessing to attend the great and honorable Court, we subscribe ourselves your humble petitioners.”

This request was graciously granted and power given to levy this rate upon the land of any proprietor who should neglect or refuse to pay. Freedom from the payment of Colony rates had been previously accorded—the sum levied to be improved for building a minister's house and meeting-house. A minister was soon procured—Mr. John Fisk of Braintree, Mass., a son of Reverend Moses Fisk and a graduate of Harvard College in 1702. Religious services were now held in different parts of the town. July 16, 1711, the town agreed to give Mr. Fisk three hundred and fifty acres of land for his encouragement to settle in the work of the ministry. James Leavens and Sampson Howe were appointed a committee to lay out this land; Eleazer Bateman and Ephraim Warren to survey it. Two hundred acres were laid out to him on French River, beyond the bounds of Killingly as it afterwards proved. Seventy-five acres for the homestead were selected on the eastern slope of Killingly Hill, and seventy-five on Assawaga or Five-Mile River. Stated religious services were probably held after this date by Mr. Fisk, though some years passed before his settlement. Special services were held September 9, 1711, when the sacrament was administered by Mr. Estabrook of Canterbury and three children were dedicated to God in baptism. Arrangements were also made for the erection of the meeting-house and minister's house, but no records concerning them have been preserved.

Immigration was still progressing. In 1711, a Massachusetts Colony took possession of Chestnut Hill, an extensive rise of land in the east of the town, with steep sides heavily wooded and a broad open plateau on the summit. This fine site was included in the grants laid out to John and Joseph Haynes, Timothy Woodbridge and Governor



Treat ; sold by them to John Allen ; by him to Captain John Chandler, who sold the whole tract—twenty-four hundred acres for £312—to Eleazer and Thomas Bateman of Concord, Samuel and Thomas Gould, Nathaniel Lawrence, Ebenezer Bloss, Thomas Richardson and Ebenezer Knight, joint proprietors. John Brown, Moses Barret, Josiah Proctor, Daniel Carrol, Samuel Robbins, Daniel Ross and John Grover were soon after admitted among the Chestnut Hill proprietors. Most of these purchasers became valued citizens of Killingly. Home lots were laid out on the hill summit ; the remainder of the land was held in common for many years. A road was laid over the hill-top, and carried on to Cutler's mill and the Providence way. The remainder of Haynes's grant was laid out east of Assawaga River, bordering south on Whetstone Brook and was purchased by Nicholas Cady, who in 1709, removed his residence to this more southern locality. This tract, together with Breakneck Hill on the east and much other land in this vicinity, passed into the hands of Ephraim Warren, son of Deacon Jacob Warren of Plainfield and one of the first settlers of Killingly centre. The Owaneco land in the south of Killingly, held by Plainfield gentlemen, was still unsettled and undivided, though many rights were sold and bartered. Edward Spalding bought the rights of James Kingsbury and William Marsh, for £1. 10s. each. In 1708, Michael Hewlett purchased Parkhurst's right for one pound ; Jacob Warren sold his right to this land to Nicholas Cady in exchange for land north of Whetstone Brook, southwest from Chestnut Hill," in 1710. Thomas Stevens, at the same date, sold his share to Ephraim Warren of Killingly. John Hutchins bought out the rights of Nathaniel Jewell and Samuel Shepard.

In the north part of Killingly, settlement was rapidly advancing. William Larned, a young adventurer from Framingham, bought land of Winter in 1712. The two Richard Evanses now sold their homesteads and removed to Providence. The northern farm was purchased by Samuel Converse of Woburn in 1710 ; the southern establishment—"a tenement of houses, barn, orchard, tanning pits, fulling-mill" with about three hundred acres of land—was sold to Simon Bryant of Braintree for £224, who to his other valuable possessions added *seven* blooming and capable daughters. James Wilson of Lexington bought land of Converse, adjoining Bryant, and Samuel Lee also settled in this thriving neighborhood.

In 1713, the long-disputed boundary between Massachusetts and Connecticut was rectified, Woodward's and Saffery's Line abrogated and a new line run some six or seven miles northward. Killingly at once assumed that this new Colony bound was now her northern boundary-line and proceeded to take possession of the annexed

territory, whereupon the Governor and Council, who had other plans for its disposal, sent the following order:—

“*January 7, 1713*. This board being informed that the town of Kellingly purpose to lay out lands as within the township of Kellingly, up to the line of this Colony as lately run by the commissioners for that end appointed, whereas the grant of that township which bounds them by the north line of this Colony, was made at a time when a line from Woodward’s and Saffery’s first station to Bissel’s house on Connecticut River in Windsor was the only line between this Colony and the Province of Massachusetts, which had been run by the order of the Massachusetts Colony, and there was no other line at the said time to be given them as the north bounds of said town: by which line they had the full extent of miles from south to north, given them for the extent of their township;—and there being now by the late running of the line, a tract of land within this Colony to the northward of the said township of Kellingly sufficient to make a township and to which the town of Kellingly can have no right by their grant of the said township.

*It is agreed*, that the selectmen of the town of Kellingly be, and they are hereby strictly charged, to give immediate notice to the said town in a town meeting for that end to be by them forthwith called, that they do not presume to make or lay out any grants of land to the northward of the antient line run by Woodward and Saffery to Bissel’s house afore said, as they will answer the contrary.”

In spite of this prohibition Killingly continued to encroach upon the land northward, and not only laid out land but assumed jurisdiction and *presumed* to assess its inhabitants.

At the expiration of the four years’ release from the payment of country rate, the meeting-house was scarcely begun and the minister yet unsettled. The settlers labored under great difficulties and discouragements. Much of their land was poor and rough, hard to subdue and cultivate. Money was scarce, inhabitants widely scattered and many public works to be accomplished. Mr. Fisk continued to officiate in the ordinary Sabbath service, and the neighboring ministers—Messrs. Coit, Estabrook and Dwight—at times administered the sacrament and baptized many children. In 1713, Killingly sent her first representative to the Assembly—Mr. Peter Aspinwall—but made no provision for paying colonial rates. The selectmen were thereupon enjoined to provide a list of polls and ratable estates, but when among them were included inhabitants north of Killingly’s prescribed limits, Governor Saltonstall was required—“to order the selectmen of the said town not to enter in the said list any polls or estates, living and being above nine miles to the northward of a line parallel to the north bounds of the town of Plainfield, or to the south bounds of the said town of Killingly: the grant of the said township of Killingly limiting the same not to be above nine miles to the northwards of the said south bounds.”

In the summer of 1714, the meeting-house was raised and covered. Its site was east of the Plainfield road, about one-fourth of a mile south of the present East Putnam meeting house. Nothing is known of its size and appearance, or of the circumstances of its building. In the

ensuing summer it was made ready for occupation and preparations made for church organization. September 15, 1715, was observed in Killingly as a day of solemn fasting and prayer, preparatory to the gathering of a church and the ordination of a pastor. Mr. Estabrook conducted the services in the morning, preaching from Heb. XII: 28. Mr. Dwight officiated in the afternoon—taking for his text, Canticles VIII: 8. Mr. Peter Aspinwall and Simon Bryant then repaired to the General Assembly and in behalf of “a company of communicants or inhabitants of the town of Killingly,” thus petitioned:—

“It having pleased Almighty God in his merciful providence to bring his own work so far forward among us, notwithstanding the many and great difficulties we have met in forming our new plantation, as to unite our hearts in the choice of the Reverend John Fisk to be the minister of this town—of whose accomplishments for the evangelical service we have had experience for a considerable season to our great satisfaction, and with whom we have agreed for a settlement in the ministry among us. And as there appears among us a competent number of persons to form themselves into a particular church of Christ, that we may have the aforesaid gentleman installed into the pastoral office over us, and the blessed institutions of Christ dispensed to us, and also being informed of our duty and obligation established by law to endeavor the countenance of the Government over us that the communicants here may coalesce into a church estate and fellowship—we, therefore, your humble petitioners, affectionately pray this Great and General Court in their great wisdom and extensive benignity to exert their authority for our benefit as the law directs, by passing an act that the brethren in full communion among us may enjoy the leave and approbation of this Honorable Assembly for embodying into church estate, that so a gospel candlestick may be erected in the fields of the wood, with a burning and shining light fixt in it, to the glory of our ascended Lord and for the comfort and edification of ourselves and latest posterity—which good work we have appointed (God’s gracious providence permitting) to accomplish very speedily.”

This request being granted,—“October 19, 1715, a church was publicly gathered in Killingly and John Fisk ordained the pastor of it.” Mr. Dwight of Woodstock, opened the service with prayer. Reverend Mr. Baxter of Medford, preached from Romans I: 16. Reverend Mr. Thatcher of Milton, gave the charge to the minister and made the preceding and subsequent prayers; Mr. Estabrook gave the right hand of fellowship; part of a psalm was sung. John Fisk, James Danielson, Peter Aspinwall, James Leavens, Sampson Howe, Eleazer Balman, Richard Blossse, George Blanchard, Isaac Jewett, Thomas Gould and Stephen Grover united in church fellowship—Danielson, Aspinwall, Leavens, and Howe bringing letters from the church of Woodstock; the others from different Massachusetts churches, with the exception of Thomas Gould and Stephen Grover, who were admitted by the Council. The original covenant adopted by the church has not been preserved. Sixteen additional communicants were admitted into the church before the close of the year. At the lecture preparatory to its first communion, December 29, 1715, Peter Aspinwall and Eleazer Balman were chosen deacons. The first marriage recorded by the young minister was that of William Larned to Hannah, the first of the seven notable



daughters of Simon Bryant. Mr. Fisk was himself married November 26, 1717, to Abigail, daughter of Reverend Nehemiah Hobart of Newton, Mass., and sister of Mr. Samuel Estabrook of Canterbury. The only incident of his domestic life that has come down to us, is the burning of his house and all its contents one Sabbath, when the family were attending public worship. The ministry of Mr. Fisk was acceptable and prosperous, and large numbers were added to the church. His pastoral charge comprehended also the inhabitants north of Killingly, who were allowed to pay church rates, if not other town charges. Mr. Fisk was remarkably minute and methodical in the registry of church records, keeping separate lists of those uniting with the church by profession and by letter and of those owning the covenant. Very full lists of marriages and baptisms were preserved by him, which acquired additional value from the total lack of town records during the greater part of his ministry. Of the salary and settlement allowed to him nothing further is known, save that the hundred acres of land given by Captain Chandler to the first settled minister of Killingly, "which land by the ordering of Divine Providence appertains to John Fisk"—were laid out to him in 1721, west of Five-Mile River, a half-mile east of the meeting-house.

The population of Killingly continued to increase. Daniel Cady removed to the south part of Pomfret; Nicholas Cady to Preston, but others took their places. Robert Day settled south of Whetstone Brook in 1717. Nell-Ellick Saunders—afterwards called Alexander—bought land of the non-resident Mighills in 1721, near Lake Mashapaug, which soon took the name of the new resident-proprietor. Joseph Covill, Philip Priest, Andrew Philips and John Comins of Charlestown, were admitted among the Chestnut Hill company. John Hutchins of Plainfield is believed to have taken possession of the the north part of the Owaneco Purchase about 1720. In 1721, Jacob Spalding, then just of age, received from his father, Edward of Plainfield, a deed of "the twenty-first lot in Plainfield Purchase, cornering on Horse Hill." Jacob at once built a fortified house and established himself there with his young wife, the first settlers of South Killingly and the only white inhabitants within many miles. Unoccupied Colony land stretched north and south of them and Rhode Island's barbarous border land lay at the east. Wild beasts abounded and still wilder savages, wandering Nipmucks, Quinebaugs and Narragansets, craving food and shelter, now kind and friendly, then cross and quarrelsome, but in the main submissive to the whites. Jacob's triumph over the Indian, who attempted to make him pay twice for a deer-skin soon after his settlement, secured for him permanent respect and authority. The drunken



savage mislaid the bill and forgot the payment, and after a fruitless demand, persuaded some of his friends to go with him to kill Jacob. They found him busily engaged shingling the roof of his new barn. The Indian again demanded pay for the skin. Jacob refused, whereupon the Indian raised his bow and sent an arrow to bring him to terms. Jacob jumped to the other side the ridgepole; his assailant followed him below, and so they went on, dodging back and forth over and around the barn, till the wearied Indian stopped to refresh himself with some tobacco, and pulled out from his pouch the *very tenor bill* paid by his antagonist. He stood amazed and conscience-stricken. The other Indians burst out against him—"He was a liar and Jacob an honest man." According to one version of the legend, "they would have killed him, but Jacob came down from the barn and interceded for the man's life;" others say, that Jacob referred his punishment to the chief Indian, who had him tied up to a tree and soundly flogged.

The difficulty of procuring supplies in this remote settlement was a serious annoyance to these young settlers. In the first summer they broke up land, raised grain and stock, but ere the winter was over there was nothing left for themselves or their cattle, and the snow was so deep that supplies could not be brought to them, and their only resource was to return to Plainfield,—“so starting the oxen ahead to break out a path, the cows followed and then Mr. Spalding and his family.” Even after some years settlement, with children to feed, they often suffered from scarcity of food, and various privations. The only accessible grist-mill was that on the Moosup, five miles distant, a whole day's journey through the winter snow drifts, so that Mr. Spalding was obliged to pass the night when he carried his grain there. On one such occasion the family was very short of provisos. An enormous beef-bone, which had perhaps served as basis for many messes of bean-porridge, was given over to the children, picked clean and scraped over and over, and again laid up lest every particle of flesh or gristle had not been removed. Night came on. The children went to sleep; the anxious mother watched and listened. Indians had been around through the day unusually insolent and troublesome, and she had given them what food she could spare through the window—a square hole, closed with a sliding-board—but had not suffered them to enter. Now, she was sure she heard them prowling about the house. She listened more intently. After a time, she was certain that she heard some one climbing up to the window, intending doubtless to break in and assault her and her sleeping children. She looked around the room for some defensive weapon and her eye caught the great beef-bone. Quick as a flash she seized it, opened the window and hurled it with all her strength into the face of an advancing Indian. He gave

a most horrible howl, dropped to the ground and fled with all the company, frightened out of their wits by this most extraordinary projectile, and fearing worse things were in store for them. The prowess shown by both Mr. and Mrs. Spalding in this and other rencontres, put an end after a time to these annoyances and brought their unruly neighbors under some degree of subjection. Other settlers in time removed to this neighborhood, but the progress of the settlement was very slow for several years.

In 1721, the town of Killingly laid out and distributed its first division of public lands,—Peter Aspinwall, James Leavens and Joseph Cady, committee. About eighty proprietors received shares of this land, showing a large increase of population. No record is preserved of the terms and extent of this division. During this year the trainband was reorganized. Mr. Joseph Cady chosen captain; Mr. Ephraim Warren, lieutenant; Mr. Thomas Gould, ensign. Peter Aspinwall, Simon Bryant, George Blanchard, Thomas Whittemore and Ephraim Warren served successively as representatives. Peter Aspinwall was chosen a justice of the peace in 1716; Joseph Leavens in 1725. Of the progress of schools, roads and many public affairs in Killingly, no knowledge can be obtained. A burial-ground south of the Providence road was given to the town by Peter Aspinwall at an early date.

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## XXV.

### QUINNATISSET.

THE territory north of Killingly, known to the Indians as Quinnatisset, now incorporated into the township of Thompson, remained for many years in its aboriginal condition. Part of this tract was granted by the Massachusetts Government to its native proprietors, Black James and his associates, and was conveyed by them to Stoughton and Dudley, laid out in farms in 1684, and then left for thirty years to wild beasts and savages. Thompson and Freak, the largest land-holders, were non-resident Englishmen, and Dudley and Stoughton too much occupied with public affairs to attempt the settlement of a remote and contested section, which they could not but know must in time revert to Connecticut. New Roxbury grew up into a thriving township, settlements were initiated in Mashamoquet and Aspinock, Killingly was laid out southward, and still Quinnatisset was left to

solitude and desolation, traversed only by Indian hunters and passing travelers. Its fort and wigwam had fallen into ruins, forests had overgrown its once open hill-tops, its surveyor's lines were over-run with thickets and brambles, the bounds that marked the farms were decayed and obliterated. The old Connecticut Road, spanning its north-west corner and the "gangway to Boston," braved by valorous Plainfield and Killingly settlers, were long the only vestiges of civilization in this benighted region.

The first known settler within Quinnatisset limits was one Eleazer Spalding of Woodstock, who, without purchase or license, took possession of land laid out to Josiah Cotton on the Quinebaug and occupied it for many years, in spite of remonstrance and attempted ejection. Other "squatters" may have inhabited the vicinity of Woodstock. The first regular and datable settler within the limits of the present Thompson, was Richard Dresser of Rowley, who, after a year's trial of the new settlement at Mashamoquet, purchased of Captain John Chandler in 1707, for £120, "the place called Nashaway." This name, originally designating the point of land between the Quinebaug and French Rivers, was also extended to the land west of this point, on which Mr. Dresser settled. The road from Woodstock to Providence passed near his dwelling, which was a little south of the site of the present West Thompson village. Richard Dresser married Mary Peabody of Rowley, in 1708, and their son, Jacob, born in 1710, was the first white male child born within Thompson territory. In 1708, Richard Dresser sold "the land between the rivers" to Sampson Howe of Roxbury, who took immediate possession and was at once claimed as an inhabitant of Killingly, becoming one of its most prominent and useful citizens. The land west of the Quinebaug was never claimed by that township.

Isaac Jewett of Rowley and John Younglove soon followed Sampson Howe, settling further north between the rivers, on land purchased of Jabez Corbin in 1711. Their farms were much infested with bears, wolves and Indians, and a log fort or garrison found needful for protection. The first settler in the vicinity of Quinnatisset Hill was Samuel Converse of Woburn, who secured a deed of land from Richard Evans in 1710, and with his wife and five sons settled about a mile south of the hill-top. The Killingly settlers were near him on the south, but northward to the old towns of Oxford and Mendon the country was a savage wilderness, its rude paths only designated by marks on tree trunks. Mr. Converse's dwelling-house stood near the Boston road, and furnished rest and entertainment to many a passing traveler.

By the settlement of Massachusetts boundary line in 1713, the land

north of Killingly was allowed to the Colony of Connecticut. Massachusetts was forced to admit that Woodward's and Saffery's line ran some miles south of the bound prescribed by her patent, and in the course of settlement it was also found that the south part of the town of Woodstock and nearly half of Thompson's and Freak's farms lay south of this erroneous Colony line. That Connecticut had a lawful right to the fee as well as jurisdiction of this land no one could deny, but beset by enemies at home and abroad she was forced to yield it to the stronger Colony, and allowed Massachusetts, by formal agreement and covenant, to keep the towns laid out by her in Connecticut territory, and the various grantees to retain possession of this land, receiving as equivalent an equal number of acres in distant localities. Under this arrangement, Connecticut yielded :

To the town of Woodstock,	50,419 acres.
To Joseph Dudley,	1,500 "
To the heirs of Robert Thompson,	2,000 "
" " " Thomas Freak,	2,000 "
" " " William Whiting,	1,000 "
To John Gore,	500 "
To Gardner and Gambling, each,	500 "
To John Cotton,	500 "
To John Collins,	500 "
To Black James and Company,	2,228 "

The land between the Quinebaug and Woodstock, appropriated by Major Fitch as a part of Wabbaquasset, had been purchased by Captain John Chandler, and much of the land between the Quinebaug and French Rivers was also in the possession of Woodstock gentlemen. The land east of the French River not covered by previous grants and claims, reverted to the Colony of Connecticut.

The holders of land under grants from Massachusetts hastened to identify and appropriate their possessions. Dudley, Stoughton and even Black James secured their portions at once, but the other grantees met many obstacles. A corner of Gore's had been taken up by Samuel Converse; Cotton's was forcibly held by Spalding; Whiting's was reported under-measured, and the boundaries of Thompson's and Freak's were so defaced and overgrown that even the practiced eye of Captain John Chandler failed to discover them. At length, with the assistance of Colonel William Dudley and Benjamin Gambling, who had aided in the original survey, "a tree marked F" was found on Fort Hill, and measuring from it they came upon other marked trees and monuments and were able to identify and refresh the bounds of the five thousand-acre tract. The Thompson land was then confirmed to Joseph Thompson of England; Freak's farm to Josiah Wolcott of Salem and his wife Mary, niece of Thomas Freak, and the other grantees received confirmation of their grants from the Government of Connecticut.



Quinnatisset, when thus assumed by Connecticut, was mostly a savage wilderness; its few settlers, Dresser, Howe, Jewett, Younglove, Converse and the squatter, Spalding—scattered along its southern and western borders. The best part of its land was taken up by non-residents, and a town organization was deemed by these gentlemen essential for the security and settlement of their property. "Josiah Wolcott, in his own name and in the name of Major Robert Thompson and other proprietors of the greatest part of the land lying in the northeast of Connecticut, east of Woodstock, north of Killingly," petitioned the General Assembly for a township in 1714. The Assembly considered the request; found that "from the south line of Killingly to the ancient supposed bounds of this Colony is eleven miles, and from thence to the now-established line is seven miles, but not knowing the width" deferred decision. In May, 1715, Mr. Wolcott again petitioned "for the purpose of improving the lands and making a plantation," having information from Captain Chandler, John Plumb and others that the tract north of Killingly was amply sufficient for a township. The Upper House granted the township, "provided Killingly be allowed nine miles," but the Lower dissented. Killingly had already manifested her determination to appropriate this land, and fears were entertained of wronging that needy township. The petition for the annexation of the vacant land northward, presented by Peter Aspinwall in 1716, met, however, with flat rejection. The Colony could not decide what to do with her new territory. Its inhabitants apparently preferred absorption in Killingly; its non-resident land-holders, an independent township. The lack of local organization and officers subjected these gentlemen to encroachments and losses, and debarred them from prosecutions and trials. A forcible representation from Captain Chandler in 1717 of these wrongs and inconveniences, procured the annexation of the land east of Woodstock to the county of New London, while Killingly was pacified by liberty to levy rates therein for her minister.

The unorganized and somewhat lawless condition of the Quinnatisset country did not prevent settlement. Its first settler after annexation to Connecticut was probably Samuel Morris of Marlborough, son of the first Edward Morris of Woodstock, who, after some years residence in an old settled township, purchased in 1714, of the Hon. Joseph and Madame Rebecca Dudley, fifteen hundred acres of land west of the Myanexet, *alias* Quinebaug River—the site of the present village of New Boston—and there established himself with his family. A house with fortifications was soon erected, land subdued and many improvements initiated. The vicinity of Black James and the remaining Nipmuck Indians made defences and precautions needful for

a time, but Mr. Morris soon gained influence and authority over them, and was dignified with the honorary title of governor. A blast of the conch-shell, it was said, would bring an hundred Indians to the aid of Governor Morris. The various public enterprises achieved by Mr. Morris won him much respect and consideration through all the surrounding country. The first permanent bridge across the Quinebaug River was completed by him in 1718, at the fording-place of the old Connecticut Road, and was exceedingly "convenient and beneficial to travelers." More than a mile of this road passed through his land and was greatly improved by him, and kept in order. Two smaller bridges were also built by him in this vicinity, and much money expended in clearing the channel of the river. For these various public services and improvements, Mr. Morris was freed for ten years from payment of country taxes. He was also allowed the privilege of attending public worship in Woodstock, where he paid rates and helped build its second meeting-house, and was rewarded by one of the chief seats in that pretentious edifice.

Settlers soon also took possession of land on the French River, David Shapley and Samuel Davis buying farms of Captain John Chandler in 1715. Henry Ellithorp next settled near the site of the present Grosvenor Dale, north of Davis. Samuel Converse, for fifty pounds, conveyed "a part of High Plain, near Quinnatisset, to Urian Horsmor of Woodstock, in 1716. James and Jeremiah Horsmor also bought land of James Leavens and Peter Aspinwall, east of French River. In 1716, Josiah Wolcott made the first sale of land on Quinnatisset Hill, conveying, for two hundred pounds, four hundred acres on the summit of the hill, to Captain John Sabin of Pomfret, and agreeing "to defend said Sabin in quiet and peaceable possession of the premises, so that he be not forcibly ejected." This guaranty was called out by the belligerent attitude of Killingly, who, having discovered that Thompson, Wolcott and Gore had encroached upon her lawful limits, threatened forcible seizure. Captain Sabin, backed by Wolcott, was however, too formidable to be molested, and he soon made over his purchase to his son, Hezekiah, who put up a house and settled there with his family, the first resident proprietor of Quinnatisset—now Thompson Hill. The red tavern, long occupied by Mr. Sabin, became one of the most noted way-marks between Boston and Hartford. The remaining sixteen hundred acres of Freak's Farm were held many years by Esquire Wolcott. Gore's five hundred acres south of Wolcott's, known as the Quinnatisset Farm, were sold by him to Ebenezer Newell of Roxbury, and after several transfers passed into the hands of its first settlers, John Cooper and Benjamin Russel.

The country north of Quinnatisset Hill was also opened to settlement. Whiting's thousand-acre farm, south of Lake Chaubongum, after securing its complement, was purchased by Mr. Sampson Howe and Comfort Starr of Dedham, in 1715, and laid out in farms to be sold or rented. Two thousand acres of land granted to Governor Saltonstall by the General Assembly in 1714, "among the broken land lying between or among the grants to Massachusetts gentlemen," were laid out east of Whitney's farm, in the northeast corner of the Colony. Daniel Ross of Killingly and Comfort Starr soon purchased each five hundred acres of this land—the latter selling farms to James Atwell and Jaffrey Peabody, and reserving for himself a homestead a little west of what is now called Brandy Hill. The first resident of this hill was probably Benjamin Bixby of Topsfield, who built himself a house in 1719, east side of the road to Boston. This settler experienced quite unusual casualties. His house, as the last out-post of civilization on the road from Connecticut, was much frequented by travelers, Indians and lawless borderers. On one occasion, Mrs. Bixby, when alone, refused to give liquor to a drunken savage, whereupon he shot her in the thigh, wounding her severely. This outrage greatly alarmed the few inhabitants of this remote Border-land, especially as it was a time of much Indian alarm and violence, and a report of it was speedily sent to the Governor and Council, who immediately took measures for the discovery and punishment of the perpetrator. It was found that he had been at Mohegan, "entertained there and conveyed away." The Mohegans were warned "to abstain from drink, which puts men upon saying and doing things that are provoking," and charged "that they don't walk with arms any more than English men into English houses or settlements," whereby such "unhappy accidents might be prevented." It was also ordered, October 3, 1720 :—

"That the clerk of the Council do write to Richard Bushnell, Esq., to deliver to Benjamin Bigsby of Killingly what estate the said Bushnell has in his hands belonging to the Indian that shot said Bigsby's wife."

Scarcely had the unfortunate Mrs. Bixby recovered from this misadventure when she was "visited by the awful providence of Heaven,"—being struck by lightning in a terrific thunder shower and very seriously injured and disabled. This double calamity called out the sympathy and compassion of all the surrounding country, and such tender concern "for these misfortunes was expressed by Governor Saltonstall, through Lieutenant Peter Aspinwall, that Mr. Bixby was constrained to express by letter "his grateful acknowledgment of his Honor's undeserved kindness," and further inform him "that his wife continued in very difficult circumstances and was unlikely to recover the usual soundness of her limbs under another year, if ever." With other "material aid,"

offered to Mr. Bixby in his misfortunes, "seventeen pounds were forwarded by the Indians at New London," probably in atonement of that "unhappy *accident*" of shooting.

Pottaquatic—now Quaddie—southeast of Quinmattisset Hill, was laid out in 1716, on a grant to Giles Hamlin, and after various transfers was purchased in 1719, by its first resident proprietor—Henry Green of Malden—who, with eight sons, at once took possession of this wild region. A rough, rocky wilderness extended many miles around it, abounding in wild beasts and game. A large colony of beavers held possession of the Assawaga or Five-Mile River, and had constructed a very effective and substantial dam at the present mill-site. Mr. Green and his numerous sons soon established themselves in comfortable quarters, broke up land, put up log houses and a sawmill—borrowing the beavers' dam till a better one could be provided—and aided much in opening and settling the wild region around them. He was followed in 1721, by John Hascall of Middleborough, who purchased five hundred acres granted to Joseph Collins of Guilford—laid out north of Thompson and south of Saltonstall land—but having the misfortune to burn his house down soon after its completion, he then removed his family and residence to the extreme northwest of the Colony-land, on the tract claimed by the heirs of John Collins. The Joseph Collins tract was sold by Hascall to John King of Taunton, who retained it for life without taking personal possession, and whose name still clings to a small lake within its borders.

A hundred acres east of Hascall's, extending nearly to Rhode Island line, were sold by James Leavens, in 1721, to Edward Munyan of Salem. Mr. Munyan was a weaver by trade, who had emigrated from England about 1700, but finding little demand for his labors, removed with wife, son and two daughters to this remote wilderness. The journey was long and laborious; roads very poor; streams seldom bridged. Six cows, ten sheep and four hogs, to stock the farm, shared the perils of the way. Oxen were hired at the different villages to convey the cart of household goods from one settlement to another. The old oak tree under which they encamped the night of their arrival, was found covered with wild turkeys in the morning. A dense, unbroken forest stretched eastward many miles into Rhode Island. The Greens and Hascalls were their nearest neighbors, and they supposed them to be the only inhabitants of the region. Wolves chased and worried the cattle; pine-knots were burned through the night to scare away wild beasts and Indians. A log house was built during the summer and land adjoining broken up and planted with corn, from which in the autumn three apronfuls of ears were harvested by the daughters. Two Salem families soon followed Mr. Munyan into the wilderness—William



Moffatt, who purchased fifty acres of James Leavens, and Samuel Utter, who apparently squatted on King's tract. In 1722, Henry and Ebenezer Green sold to Jonathan Clough of Salisbury, a hundred acres of land running southeast of a little footpath leading from Fort Hill to Simon Bryant's. A farm, "south side of Pottaquatic Hill, near Jonathan Clough's house," was soon after sold, by the same, to Nathaniel Merrill, a settler favored like Simon Bryant with a bountiful supply of daughters.

Gardner's and Gambling's tract, north of Wolcott's, was sold to Joseph Ellis and Nathaniel Wight in 1721—Ellis taking the east and Wight the western section. Jacob Bixby, nephew of Benjamin, Abraham Burrill of Lynn, John Wiley of Reading, Israel Joslyn of Salem, Nath. Brown of Killingly, James Coats of Dudley and Philip McIntyre, all settled north of Quinnatisset Hill between 1721 and '26—buying farms of Ellis, Wight, Howe and Starr. Nathaniel Crosby of Cambridge, settled near the French River in 1722, on land bought of Sampson Howe. Richard Upham of Malden, purchased first division land, east of French River of Isaac Jewett in 1726, and conveyed the same and other subsequent purchases to his son Ivory. The wild land west of the Quinebaug, owned by Woodstock residents, was first settled by John Dwight, son of the Rev. Josiah Dwight, who secured a large tract from Jabez Corbin in 1726. Previous to this purchase, he had established himself probably on the "wild land" owned by his father, and, with Sampson Howe, built a cart-bridge over the Quinebaug at great charge, but failed to secure help from government for this service.

Over thirty families were thus settled on the country land north of Killingly in 1726. No town privileges had been allowed them, but such as were unlawfully accorded by Killingly, who spared no pains to bring them under her jurisdiction and secure possession of this vacant territory. Its inhabitants participated in her secular as well as religious privileges, and were allowed to vote in town-meetings, pay taxes and hold public offices. Sampson Howe, Benjamin Bixby, Henry Green, Hezekiah Sabin and others were active in town affairs. A few of the residents west of the Quinebaug attended church in Woodstock, but a greater part of the inhabitants were connected with the church in Killingly, attended public worship in its distant meeting-house, and had their children baptized by its worthy minister. Schools, roads, pounds and other public improvements were not attempted by this irregular government.

Killingly's persistent attempts to secure possession of this land occasioned much trouble and confusion. Two hundred acres promised by the town to the Rev. Mr. Fisk, were laid out in Thompson's land,

and Hascall and Spalding were encouraged in their unlawful appropriation of Cotton's and Collins' grants. In 1721, the selectmen of Killingly, without permission from Government, proceeded to lay out this Colony land and apportion it among her own inhabitants and its consenting residents. The Massachusetts Government wrote to Connecticut in behalf of Cotton and Collins, and received assurance that their claims should be made up to them in the ungranted land near Woodstock. In 1726, Paul and William Dudley, Josiah Wolcott and Samuel Morris represented to the General Court, "that Killingly, by what right they knew not, had laid out large quantities of land north of her prescribed bound, which was unjust and destructive of their rights," and begged relief. Joseph Leavens and Joseph Cady were summoned to answer in behalf of Killingly proprietors, and insisted that the land thus laid out was included within their patent. The Court pronounced their plea sufficient, but ordered patents to be granted and executed to such grantees "as shall show grants and surveys made by Massachusetts." Though this decision admitted Killingly's claim to Connecticut's share of this Colony land, she was still dissatisfied, and persisted in her efforts to recover the tracts allowed to Massachusetts grantees.

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## XXVI.

## MASHAMOQUET. MORTLAKE.

THE township of Pomfret, though later organized than that of Killingly, preceded it in date of settlement, its purchase and laying out quickly following that of Woodstock. Its territory was included in the Wabbaquasset Country, and came into the possession of Major Fitch in 1684. The first pioneers "sent to spy out Woodstock" brought back so good a report of a fair land stretching southward into Connecticut, that a number of Roxbury gentlemen were induced to attempt its purchase. Negotiations were promptly opened with Major Fitch, and on May 1, 1686, a deed of transfer was executed, conveying, for thirty pounds, to Samuel Ruggles, Sen., John Chandler, Sen., Benjamin Sabin, John Grosvenor, Samuel Ruggles, Jun., and Joseph Griffin, all of Roxbury, "15,100 acres of Wilderness land, to be surveyed, laid out and bounded unto them in the Wapaquasset Country in Connecticut Colony, in such place and regular form as the aforesaid grantees shall choose, or adjoining unto a certain plantation

granted by the General Court of Massachusetts unto Roxbury; already determined to lye near the patent division line in the said Wapaquasset and Nipmuck Country. Said Fitch covenanting that he is lawfully seized of said land as part of a far greater tract from Owaneco; that said company shall make choice of the place, &c., within three years, provided that to the twelve persons to be named as grantees there be added two shares for Fitch and his heirs, so as the whole number be fourteen shares, between whom the whole tract shall be equally divided, and that all divisions shall be by lot—the said Fitch having liberty to take his fourteenths in one or two lots at pleasure.”

This deed was signed in presence of John Blackwell and Wait Winthrop, and acknowledged by James Fitch, May 6, 1686, before Mr. William Stoughton, assistant. “Owaneco and Josiah, his eldest son and heir, did declare their consent to this grant, May 30, 1686, in presence of John Blackwell and John Post.” The six purchasers named in the deed at once proceeded to designate their associates, viz. :—

“Whereas, we, whose names are underwritten, being mentioned and expressed by name as purchasers of a tract of land at Wabbaquasset Hills in the Nipmuck Country, and whereas, other six persons being joint purchasers, this certifies that we do nominate John Pierpont, John White, John Ruggles, cord-wainers, John and Samuel Gore and Thomas Mowry.

Samuel Ruggles, Sen.  
John Chandler, Sen.  
Benjamin Sabin.

John Grosvenor.  
Samuel Ruggles, Jun.  
Joseph Griffin.

May 6, 1686.”

These twelve proprietors were then all residents of Roxbury, though John Chandler and Benjamin Sabin were preparing to remove to New Roxbury. John Grosvenor, who with his family had emigrated from Cheshire, England, in 1680, is said to have been sent by the company to Norwich to pay Major Fitch the purchase money. During the summer, the fifteen thousand acres were selected and laid out south of New Roxbury on the Mashamoquet River, and the tract was thenceforth designated as the Mashamoquet or Roxbury purchase. A patent of a township, including this purchase and land adjacent, was granted by the Governor and Company of Connecticut, July 8, 1686, to John Blackwell, James Fitch, Samuel Craft, Nathaniel Wilson, the Mashamoquet proprietors and others not named, for the New Plantation in the Wabbaquasset Country, and in the following October, liberty was given “to Major Fitch, Lieutenant Ruggles and others of Roxbury to settle a plantation in those parts, they attending those things most accommodable to the plantation and orders of the Colony, in which case Major J. Tolcott and Captain Joseph Allyn are to be advised with.”

Land south of the Mashamoquet Purchase was sold by Major Fitch

to Captain John Blackwell of England, a noted Puritan and friend of the Commonwealth, son-in-law of General Lambert, treasurer of Cromwell's army and member of Parliament during his administration. Captain Blackwell was one of those exempted from the general pardon at the restoration of the Stuarts, and after the accession of James II. came over to New England, commissioned by some of the English and Irish Dissenters "to inquire if they may be welcome there and may reasonably expect that liberty they promise themselves and others." Captain Blackwell was warmly welcomed in Boston, made a justice of the peace and much connected in public affairs. In 1685, the General Court of Massachusetts granted him a tract of land eight miles square, "in behalf of himself and several other worthy gentlemen of England," and also a share in the new township of Oxford, but he decided to settle his colony within the wilds of Connecticut and secured from Major Fitch, May 28, 1686, a deed of five thousand seven hundred and fifty acres of land, "containing the Newichewanna Hills and other lands adjoining, lying west of the Quinebaug and south of Tamonquas, *alias* Mashamoquet River." This land was confirmed to him "after he made his choice," November 11, 1686, by Major Fitch, Owaneco and Josiah, in presence of Hez. Usher, William Blackwell, Thomas Hooker and John Hubbard,—the Mashamoquet proprietors and other patentees of the newly granted townships, agreeing, "That Blackwell's part of 5,750 acres, situated in the southeast angle thereof, shall be accounted a separate tract by and of itself, to hold to him, his heirs and assigns, so that neither the rest of the purchasers, nor their survivors or heirs, shall challenge to have, hold or enjoy, any joynt or separate interest, title, power or jurisdiction or privilege of a township or otherwise, howsoever, or within the same from henceforth for ever." But even this provision for the independence of his projected colony did not satisfy Captain Blackwell, and October 19, 1687, he secured from the General Court of Connecticut, confirmation of his purchase, and also a patent for a separate township including it, to be laid out south of Mashamoquet Brook, six miles from east to west and seven miles from north to south—the five thousand-acre tract to be an entire town, called Mortlake. This name was given by Captain Blackwell in memory of the village of Mortlake in Surrey, England, the residence of General Lambert and a favorite resort of Cromwell's followers.

The purchasers of these tracts were desirous to enter upon immediate possession. The Mashamoquet proprietors were first in the field and on March 9, 1687, met together to consult upon the settlement of their Purchase. Public affairs were then very threatening; a revolution was imminent and delay was apprehended to be of dangerous



consequence. The consent and compliance of Major Fitch to any arrangements they might make were judged essentially necessary, and as a meeting of all the proprietors with him could only be obtained with great difficulty, and all concerns relating to the way and manner of division might be more easily settled by a smaller number, their "truly and beloved friends, Samuel Ruggles, Sen. and Jun., John White, Samuel Gore and John Grosvenor," were requested and authorized "to treat with Major Fitch in and concerning all matters relating to said lands." These gentlemen reported, April 7, That half the land was to be at once laid out; that Major Fitch had already received 1,080 acres, east side of the Purchase, and that all the purchasers were now to have, each 540 acres laid out to him, and the remainder to be equally divided among the twelve proprietors and Major Fitch.

Before this division was effected, Andross assumed the government of Connecticut, and attempts to appropriate the Purchase were deferred till some years after his deposition. May 30, 1693, the proprietors again met to make arrangements for distribution. Some changes and additions were found needful. The original south bound of the Purchase was a line run due west from the mouth of the Mashamoquet, but as Capt. Blackwell had been allowed that river, with all its meerings and veerings for his northern boundary, they were obliged to conform to it, and thus lost a portion of their territory. It was voted, "That a line be run west side of the tract to take in as much land as Captain Blackwell has taken out of the southeast corner, and that two or three of the best parcels be taken up and sub-divided so that each may have one half his dues, being five hundred and forty acres—to be done by Benjamin Sabin and John Chandler with John Gore." The latter, unable to take the long journey at this time, thus transfers the work to the Woodstock surveyor:—

"MR. BUTCHER: My other occasions obstructing my coming up to your town before winter to sub-divide Mashamoquet Purchase and there being a necessity of having it done with what convenient speed may be, these are to request *you* to do it; and in doing thereof, I would have you attend the instructions above specified. Sir, I have formerly acquainted you with what terms I was to do it upon, which will be made good to you and I hope with some addition which Lieutenant Ruggles, also, gives hopes of, which is all at present from your friend and servant,

JOHN GORE."

The survey and divisions were accomplished during the winter, and on March 27, 1694, nearly eight years after the date of purchase, the several proprietors met in Roxbury to receive their respective shares. John Grosvenor—who died September 27, 1691, "in y<sup>e</sup> 49th year of his age"—was represented by his widow; Samuel Ruggles, Sen., deceased, by his heirs, Thomas and Elizabeth Ruggles; Samuel Gore, deceased, by his heirs; John Pierpont, by Jacob, Benjamin and Daniel Dana of Cambridge, purchasers. The remaining proprietors

were, probably, present in person, and the allotments were distributed in the following order :

- |                         |                                   |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Esther Grosvenor.    | 7. John Chandler.                 |
| 2. Thomas Mowry.        | 8. Jacob, Ben'j. and Daniel Dana. |
| 3. John Ruggles.        | 8. Benjamin Sabin.                |
| 4. John Gore.           | 10. Thomas and Elizabeth Ruggles. |
| 5. Samuel Gore's heirs. | 11. <u>John White.</u>            |
| 6. Samuel Ruggles.      | 12. Joseph Griffin.               |

The recipients thus certified their satisfaction :—

“ The proprietors of Mashamoquet, having empowered Mr. John Butcher to divide the one-half thereof amongst them, and he having performed the same and exhibited a plot, we whose names are underwritten, being proprietors, have drawn lots and do approve of, allow, and rest satisfied with our several shares.”

The Purchase, as then laid out, extended from Woodstock line on the north through the centre of the granted township. Its eastern bound ran through Bark Meadow, east of the base of Prospect Hill. Its western bound was not clearly defined at this period. As the plot drawn by Mr. Butcher is not preserved, it is difficult to identify the lots laid out by him. These lots were subsequently re-surveyed, confirmed, and equivalents and additions laid out to them by John Chandler, Jun., and a copy of his careful “Plott” is here given.—[*See Lithograph.*]

The proprietors, it will be seen, received lots in different localities that each might have his portion of upland, lowland and meadow. John Gore probably received the whole of his fine farm upon the Mashamoquet, at the first division. The large domains of Mrs. Grosvenor and Mr. Mowry in the west of the Purchase, include lands laid out at the second division. The double lines on the plot doubtless indicate highways.

The Mashamoquet Purchase was thus ready for occupation, but the Indian war still delayed its settlement. The Wabbaquassets, scattered by King Philip's War, had returned after the settlement of Woodstock to their native haunts upon the Quinebaug and Mashamoquet, and though in the main friendly and peaceable were sometimes persuaded to join with the savage Mohawks in bloody forays and incursions. It was in this time of peril and panic, when the Woodstock settlers were huddled together in garrisons and none of the Mashamoquet proprietors dared to take possession of their property, that one man had the courage to cross the line and establish himself in the northeast corner of Connecticut within the limits of the granted township. Captain John Sabin, the first known settler of the township of Pomfret, was, like the first settler of Killingly, a native of Rehoboth, and either brother or cousin to Benjamin Sabin of Woodstock. One hundred

acres of land, "near New Roxbury, *alias* Woodstock, supposed to be in Connecticut, bounded north by Woodstock, west by Purchase, east by land between it and Quinebaug River, south by land belonging to James Fitch"—were conveyed by Fitch to Sabin for nine pounds, June 22, 1691. How soon Captain Sabin took possession of this land is not indicated, but prior to the disturbances of 1696, he had built himself a house with fortifications and gained much influence and authority over the Indians. During the Indian war he rendered much service to the inhabitants of Woodstock and also to the Government of Massachusetts and Connecticut, "by standing his ground," protecting the frontier and engaging his Indian neighbors in the service of the English. The Wabbaquassetts "would not be ordered by any but by virtue of authority from Connecticut," and thus Captain Sabin as a resident of that Colony was placed in authority over them after the alarm of 1696, and left in command of the military forces in Woodstock. After the close of the war, his discovery of fresh combinations and consultations among the Indians called out Mason's expedition to Woodstock, detailed in a previous chapter. The services rendered by Sabin and the consideration in which he was held, are best portrayed in the subjoined letter, sent by the Earl of Bellemont, governor of Massachusetts, to the Governor of Connecticut:—

"BOSTON, 1700.

I have been made sensible of the good service done by Mr. John Sabin, an inhabitant within your government, referring to the Indian affairs—he having created that confidence in them of his friendship as to be trusted with their secrecy, and that during the late troubles and war he did, at his own great charge and expense to the almost ruining of his estate, subsist and succor a considerable number of the Wabbaquassetts within a fortification about his own house, whereby, he not only prevented their defection but also rendered them serviceable to the English, and has since made discovery of the combination and consults had among the Indians to make a new resurrection and rebellion and to commit fresh hostilities upon his Majesty's English subjects. I understand, he was encouraged by your Government to hold his part in the war and that he should have allowance for his charge and expense upon the Indians, which not being adjusted and paid before the peace, he is now neglected. I cannot but account it very impolitic to lose so useful and public-spirited a man, or that he be discouraged by ingratitude, much more by injustice. I pray in his favor, that you will effectually recommend his services and expenses to the consideration of your General Assembly for a suitable recompence to be made him. I shall not fail to endeavor some gratification for him from this Government—Your humble and faithful servant,

BELLEMONT, Governor of Massachusetts.

Governor Winthrop."

Upon hearing this letter, the General Court ordered "That Mr. John Sabin upon the consideration mentioned . . . shall be allowed the sum of five pounds out of the public treasury."

## XXVII.

## PROGRESS. PETITIONS. POMFRET.

**D**URING the Indian war the family of Captain Sabin were the only white inhabitants of the future Pomfret now known to us, though it is possible that Benjamin Sitton, styling himself of "Mashamoquet in Nipmug Country," who purchased of the Danas in 1698, "fifty acres of wilderness land at a place called Mashamoquet, bounded west by Windham Rode," was also a resident. Some land sales were effected during this period. Land in the Quinebaug Valley was sold to Sabin by Fitch and Owaneco. Two hundred acres, bounded north on Sabin's first purchase, the full breadth of the land, were sold by Major Fitch to Samuel Paine of Rehoboth in 1695. Philemon Chandler, of Andover, nephew of Deacon John Chandler of Woodstock, purchased a Mashamoquet allotment of Thomas and Elizabeth Ruggles, in 1696. After the close of the war, sales multiplied and settlers straggled in. Nathaniel Gary removed to the new settlement probably as early as 1698, settling on land east of the Purchase, received, according to tradition, for his services as chain-bearer in laying out that tract, having all he could encompass in an hour's nimble running. The payment of twelve pounds secured him, in 1699, a deed of five hundred and fifty acres "southeast from Woodstock," in what was afterwards called the Gary neighborhood. The land between the Purchase and the Quinebaug, the whole length of the township, was owned by Major Fitch, who is said to have once offered it to John Grosvenor for fifteen pounds. His sons, John and Leicester, gave a much larger sum in 1698, for four hundred acres of this valuable land, extending from the mouth of the Mashamoquet to a brook at the north end of the interval. Farms east of the Purchase were sold by Major Fitch to Samuel Allen and Samuel Gary in 1699. Three hundred acres on the Quinebaug, just below its junction with Mill River—now included in the Perrin Farm—are said to have been purchased from the Wabbaquasset proprietors at a very early date by Sam. Perrin, Benj. Griggs and Peter Aspinwall, then of Woodstock, and were confirmed to them by Major Fitch on the payment of twelve pounds in 1702. The remaining land between the Quinebaug and the Purchase, from Woodstock line to the mouth of the Mashamoquet, was purchased by Captain John Chandler for twenty pounds in 1701.

The first settlement within the Purchase limits was prior to 1700. One of the first settlers was Thomas Goodell, who, after a brief sojourn in Woodstock, bought land of Deacon Chandler in 1699. He is said



to have come up alone to the new township to put up a house and prepare for his family, but that his wife became uneasy, took her spinning-wheel in hand and came up to look for him in mid-winter, and by the aid of teams and chance Woodstock travelers made the long journey in safety. Mrs. Esther Grosvenor removed to Mashamoquet in 1700. Her oldest son, William, was graduated from Harvard in 1695, and had settled in Charlestown. Her other sons, John, Leicester, Joseph, Ebenezer and Thomas, and one daughter, Susanna, came with her to the new country. A noble inheritance awaited them, the fairest portion of Mashamoquet, embracing the site of the upper part of the present Pomfret village and the hills eastward and westward. The road to Hartford and Windham passed through their land, near their first residence, which was on the western declivity of Prospect Hill, near the site afterwards occupied by Colonel Thomas Grosvenor's mansion-house. Mrs. Grosvenor was a woman of great courage and energy, and though delicately reared in England, endured cheerfully the labors and privations of the new settlement. Like Mrs. Ripley of Windham, she was skillful in tending the sick, and was long the only medical practitioner in the settlement. Her sons, just entering manhood, aided in bringing their large domains under cultivation, and early identified themselves with the growth and interests of the township. Susanna Grosvenor was married in 1702 to Joseph Shaw of Stonington. Their wedding, attended by the Rev. Josiah Dwight, is the first reported in Mashamoquet.

Philemon Chandler removed early in the century to his lot on the Wapaquians, in the south of the Purchase. Deacon John Chandler of Woodstock died in 1702, leaving to his youngest son, Joseph, "the lot in Mashamoquet, lying upon the line, and, if he see cause, all the Mashamoquet lands." The one hundred and fourteen acres upon the line were valued in the appraisal of the goods at £20; two hundred acres on Mashamoquet Brook at £12; Purchase lands still undivided at £26. The lot on the Mashamoquet was purchased in 1704 by Nathaniel Sessions—probably son of Alexander Sessions of Andover—who at once took possession of it. In 1705, the little settlement was strengthened by the accession of Deacon Benjamin Sabin of Woodstock, with his sons, Stephen, Benjamin, Nehemiah, Ebenezer, Josiah and Jeremiah. Deacon Sabin selected for his homestead a farm adjoining Philemon Chandler's, and settled his sons on land purchased of Samuel Gore's heirs and others. In 1706, Joseph Chandler sold a hundred acres of land west of Sessions on the Mashamoquet to Richard Dresser of Rowley, who conveyed the same the following year, together with a small dwelling-house built upon it, to Abiel Lyon of Woodstock. Mr. Lyon at once occupied this dwelling, and set up a

sawmill on the Mashamoquet. Joseph Chandler married in 1708 Susanna Perrin of Woodstock, and settled on the "lot on the line," bequeathed him by his father. Part of this lot and other land bordering on Woodstock were purchased and occupied by Edward Payson of Roxbury in 1708. Ebenezer Truesdell, after a short residence in the Quinebaug Valley, bought land and a house of Thomas Goodell, in the southwest part of the Purchase, now included in Abington. In 1709, Joseph Tucker, Samuel Gates and John Hubbard also bought land and settled in the south part of the Mashamoquet Purchase.

East of the Purchase, settlement was also progressing. Eight hundred acres on the Quinebaug were purchased of the Grosvenors and Captain John Chandler by John Lyon of Woodstock in 1705, and sold by him, with mansion-house and barn, to James Danielson of New Shoreham for £155, in 1706. Mr. Danielson soon afterward bought land in Killingly, east of the Quinebaug, and seems to have resided in both settlements. The mill privilege of a small brook running into the Quinebaug—known as Bark Meadow Brook—was purchased by James Sawyer in 1709, who there built and carried on the first grist-mill in the settlement. Samuel Warner and Samuel Taylor also settled in the Quinebaug valley, on land purchased from Danielson and Gary. Griggs' share of the Perrin land was secured by Samuel Paine then of Woodstock, who, with his brother Seth, early settled in this vicinity.

The settlement of Mashamoquet was attended with comparatively few hardships. Its soil was good and easily subdued; its smooth hills bare of trees to a great extent and covered with a rank, coarse native grass, resembling, it is said, a rye-field in harvest time. In proof of the natural resources and fertility of this region, old settlers were wont to relate, that a cow and calf left prior to settlement to forage for themselves through the winter, were found in the spring not only alive, but in excellent condition. Vicinity to Woodstock greatly aided the younger settlement. Many of the settlers had emigrated from that township, and still shared its business, social, and religious privileges. Indians were numerous but not especially troublesome, though fortresses were maintained in various localities during the Indian Wars. Various hunting and fishing privileges were claimed by them, and liberty to levy food and cider from the settlers. Mrs. Grosvenor, when alone, was once invaded by a company, who threatened to take the boiling meat from the pot, and made violent demonstrations, but were kept at bay by her broomstick till the arrival of her son, Ebenezer, who had gained much authority over them. The meeting-house in Woodstock was much frequented by the Borderers in Mashamoquet, and the Rev. Josiah Dwight served for many years as their pastor, attending weddings and funerals and baptizing many children.

The first recorded public recognition of the Mashamoquet settlement was in 1708, when its inhabitants were invited to join with the selectmen of Woodstock and Killingly in petitioning for a road to Providence, and were also ordered by the General Assembly, to send in their list of polls and estates, that they might bear their part and proportion of rates and taxes. The estates were appraised at £920, but the list of polls omitted. In 1709, "three men from Massamugget" were directed to join in a projected expedition against Canada, which failed of accomplishment. In 1710, a military company was organized, when about fifty males over sixteen years of age were reported in the settlement. John Sabin, its first and leading citizen—who had previously enjoyed the honorary title of Captain—was now appointed lieutenant; Ebenezer Sabin, ensign; Ebenezer Grosvenor, sergeant; James Sawyer, cornet.

In 1713, efforts were first made to secure town organization. Though the settlement was thriving and prosperous, many improvements were needful. No roads had yet been laid out, no bridges erected and the Sabbath day journey to Woodstock was burdensome and inconvenient. Nathaniel Gary was accordingly sent to Roxbury to apprise the non-resident proprietors—"Mr. Jonathan Belcher, attorney for Captain John Blackwell, and also Captain Ruggles, Joseph Griffin, Thomas Mowry, Edmond Weld and Daniel Dana—of their intention to be a town, which they all very well liked and approved of." On his return with this report, a meeting of all the inhabitants within the town limits was held, May 3, 1713, and the following agreement adopted:—

"At a meeting of the inhabitants and proprietors of Massamugget, it being our indispensable duty, as we would aim at the glory of the Lord our God, and regard not only our temporal and civil good but also, and especially, the spiritual and eternal good of our own souls and the souls of our dear wives and children—therefore, to lay such a foundation and make such suitable provisions as that we may have a gospel ministry settled amongst us and enjoy God in all his holy ordinances, the which that we may do—it is unanimously voted and agreed to, that for three ensuing years all our public charges in building a meeting-house and minister's house and settling a minister and his maintenance shall be raised after this way, viz.: one-half on all lands within the township as granted by the Gen. Assembly and now belonging to each inhabitant and proprietor of the township so granted, and the other half of public charge as aforesaid, on heads, stocks and other ratable estate. And we also agree that three judicious persons be appointed to give us timely and seasonable advice in any matters of difficulty, either respecting placing the meeting-house, or whatever else may concern or conduce to our public peace and the orderly settlement of our place. We also agree that the Honorable Assembly be petitioned unto to grant us a freedom from ordinary country charge or rates for three years, as has been their custom and favor to all new towns; and that the General Court or Assembly order that all those inhabitants and proprietors of land lying in our township that shall neglect or refuse to pay their just proportion of public charge, for the next three years ensuing—their dues being suitably demanded—that so much of their land be seized and disposed of according to law as may answer his or their just due and proportion of public charge within our township as aforesaid. Lastly, we desire and empower our loving neighbors, Lieutenant John Sabin

and Sergt. Leicester Grosvenor, humbly to present our petition, and pray the Gen. Assembly to put their sanction hereunto.—Witness our hands :

Benjamin Sabin.	John Cummings.	Leicester Grosvenor.
John Sabin.	Samuel Warner.	Ebenezer Grosvenor.
Nathaniel Gary.	Thomas Goodell.	Benjamin Sabin, Jun.
Benjamin Sitton.	Philemon Chandler.	Jeremiah Sabin.
Samuel Gates.	Daniel Allen.	Stephen Sabin.
Edward Payson.	David Allen.	Ebenezer Sabin.
Samuel Paine.	Joseph Tucker.	Josiah Sabin."
Seth Paine.	Samuel Taylor.	

In accordance with this agreement, Lieutenant Sabin and Sergeant Grosvenor appeared before the General Court, May \*14, 1713, "in behalf of ye inhabitants of, a certain tract called Mashmugget Purchase: "—

" Showing—that the petitioners have for some time labored under many difficult circumstances, by reason of not being incorporated and fixed in an orderly way, and are not only in a confused condition in respect to our civil concerns, but have not, nor are likely to have, a settled minister to break to us, our wives and children, ye bread of eternal life, unless this Honorable Assembly will please to consider our circumstances and have compassion and grant that ye Mashamoquet Purchase, in conjunction with Capt. Blackwell's, (part of said Purchase and in one angle of it), as by a map of the whole purchase, which is seven miles north and south, and six, east and west, appears—may be one town as at the first—and also grant a name, horse brand and freedom from rates. Also, beg them to put their sanction to our unanimous agreement, relating to raising wherewith to defray public charges. John Sabin and Leicester Grosvenor empowered to present this petition :—

Humbly pray the Hon. Assembly to afford us such a stroke of their authority and such favor, countenance and encouragement that we may be speedily settled, and pray that the blessings of Heaven may be showered down upon their persons, families and estates, and that the Lord their God would be pleased to direct them in all their weighty affairs."

In addition to the signers of the agreement, the following names were affixed to this petition :—

Ebenezer Truesdell.	Josiah Sessions.	James Danielson.
Benjamin Goodell.	John Hubbard.	Abiel Lyon.
Joseph Sabin.	Thomas Grosvenor.	Samuel Gary.
Nathaniel Sessions.	Joseph Grosvenor.	Joseph Chandler.
		David Bishop.

The Assembly, upon hearing this petition, at once ordered :—

"That the said inhabitants, as soon as they have procured a minister to live and preach among them, shall for the space of four years next ensuing, and have hereby granted them full power (as inhabitants of other towns may) to make rates, and raise such sums of money for building a meeting-house, minister's house and settlement, with his maintenance, as the major part shall judge fit; that the said sum or sums may be raised two-thirds on the real estate or land within the bounds of said Massamugget and one-third on heads and stocks and other rateable estate. . . . And it is also ordered, that the said Massamugget shall be called Pomfret, and the brand for horses shall be this figure, P."

May 27, 1713, Messrs. Sabin and Grosvenor made return of their proceedings and the grant of the Court, at the first public town-meeting of the inhabitants of Pomfret. Lieutenant Sabin, Sergeant Grosvenor and Ensign Sabin were elected selectmen for the new township; Philemon Chandler, clerk. No further proceedings are



recorded. The first object of the town was to secure a more accurate determination of its boundary. A survey was ordered and completed, March 20, 1714. The bound of the town, as then laid down, began at a stake by Quinebaug River between the upper and lower Falls, thence west six miles, thence south seven miles, thence east over the top of a hill called "Gray Mare," to the Quinebaug, its eastern bound. The manor of Mortlake, and also part of the township granted to Captain Blackwell, were included within its limits. Before proceeding with the organization of Pomfret, it will be necessary to gain more definite knowledge of this part of its territory and the Blackwell township.

## XXVIII.

### BLACKWELL'S TRACT. ADAMS' TRACT. SALE AND SETTLEMENT OF MORTLAKE. EXPULSION OF MARY UTTER. ATTEMPTED ANNEXATION.

**M**ORTLAKE, as we have seen, was purchased by Captain or Sir John Blackwell, for the establishment of a colony of English and Irish Dissenters, who were suffering from the oppression of King James. The course of public events frustrated this scheme. During the administration of Andross no settlement was possible, and after the Revolution it was no longer needful. Religious liberty under William and Mary could be enjoyed in Great Britain, and Blackwell himself soon returned to his native land, making no attempt to settle or improve his purchase, and thus for nearly thirty years Mortlake was left a wilderness. The land adjoining it, included in the township granted to Captain Blackwell, accrued to Major Fitch as a part of the Wabbaquasset Country. A tract two miles square in its southwest corner was taken from him in 1695, by Simon Stoddard of Boston, in execution of judgment for debt. In 1703, Richard Adams of Preston obtained, for two hundred pounds, from Major Fitch, a deed of three thousand acres of wilderness land, south of Blackwell's tract. Its bound began at the junction of the Five-Mile and Quinebaug Rivers; extending west on Blackwell's line, to a pine-tree marked B, by the side of Blackwell's Brook, and beyond it; thence south four hundred and eighty perch, thence east to the Quinebaug, where Beaver Brook empties into it. Richard Adams, Jun., appears to have made a settlement on this tract even before the deed of conveyance was executed and was the first settler, within the limits of the township granted to Blackwell, and the present town of Brooklyn. His wife was a daughter of Daniel Cady of Aspinock. Their homestead was in

the depths of a dense wilderness, much infested with wild beasts and Indians, about a mile southeast of the site of the present Brooklyn Green. A colony of beavers held possession of the brook adjoining. Their nearest neighbors were the Shepards across the Quinebaug in Plainfield; the nearest settlements were Plainfield and Peagscomsuck, and miles of pathless forest separated them from the few settlers of Mashamoquet. Richard Adams was numbered with the inhabitants of Plainfield in 1701; in 1703, assisted in the organization of Canterbury, and was claimed for many years as an inhabitant of that township.

A strip of land south of the Adams tract was purchased of Major Fitch, by John Allen of Aspinock, in 1703, and conveyed by him in 1705, to his son Isaac, who soon took personal possession. John Woodward settled south of Allen and north of Canterbury line in 1706. In 1707, Edward Spalding of Plainfield, bought land north of Canterbury bounds at the foot of Tatnick Hill, and there settled with his family. These four families were for several years the only white inhabitants within the limits of Blackwell's patent. In 1706, a rumor that Major Fitch was petitioning to have their lands included within Canterbury precincts gave these settlers much anxiety. Richard Adams was deputed to go to the General Court and "give light and information that the court might not be misled to do what would be extremely prejudicial to the inhabitants, and also interfere with the former grant to Captain Blackwell." "Tigious sickness and long weakness" prevented Mr. Adams from fulfilling this commission, but before he was "able to ride half so far as Hartford," he sent a memorial to the General Court showing:—

"That Captain Blackwell had been granted a town seven miles square under the name of Mortlake, which if laid out would reach Canterbury bounds or near it; that it was judged four miles from the north bound of Canterbury to the place they have ordered Canterbury meeting-house to be, and that for us to be taken from where the middle of Mortlake may be or near it and stated in Canterbury and thereby expected to travel seven or eight miles every Sabbath day to Canterbury meeting-house, will be extremely burthensome when we might as well be stated in Mortlake and not half so far to go to meeting, and begs the Court to consider the case and not state us to Canterbury without giving notice."

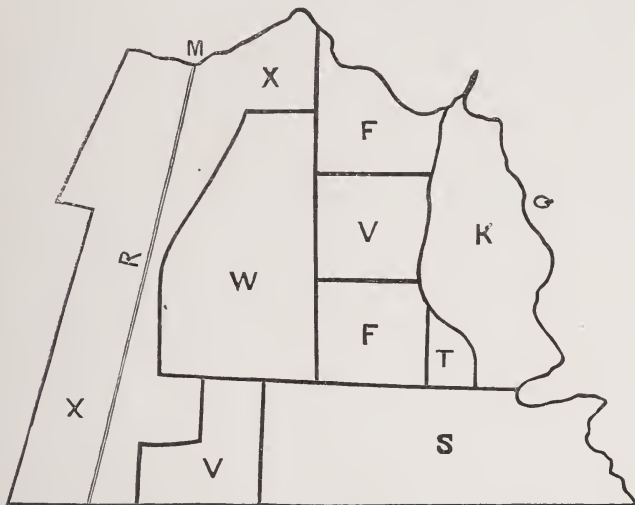
This request was granted and Richard Adams and his neighbors were left unstated to any township for several years—a few isolated families, remote from settlements and civilization. They paid rates to Canterbury and attended religious worship there when practicable. Communication with the outside world was difficult and sometimes dangerous. The road from Canterbury to Woodstock passed near Edward Spalding's residence, which soon became a place of entertainment for travelers—his first barrel of rum coming up from Norwich on horse-back, lashed between two poles and dragged behind the rider.

The Adams tract was divided after a time into eight equal and

parallel allotments, running from east to west and made over to the seven children of Richard Adams of Preston—Richard, Junior, receiving a deed of the two lower allotments in 1712. Twenty-five hundred acres west of the Adams tract were secured by Captain John Chandler in 1707. The several tracts held by Fitch, Blackwell, Stoddard and Chandler were left vacant and neglected till the death of Sir John Blackwell, when the Mortlake manor fell to his son, and was sold by him to Jonathan Belcher of Boston, April 3, 1713. Mr. Belcher—who subsequently became one of the most prominent public men of his day—governor of Massachusetts and New Jersey and founder of Princeton College, was then just entering active life and engaging in extensive business operations. He had already secured mining privileges in several Connecticut townships, and now with characteristic promptness and energy undertook the settlement of Mortlake. Captain John Chandler was at once employed to lay out, survey and take possession of this territory. He found a wild and savage wilderness, with one rude bridle-path running through it from north to south, and one family of white inhabitants settled on a small clearing. To this squatter, Jabez Utter, “for his labor, charge and expense, in building, fencing, clearing, breaking up, improving and subduing seventy acres,” Belcher granted a deed of the land thus taken up and the use of thirty acres adjoining, but upon further consideration preferred to free his purchase from every incumbrance and secured a quit-claim deed from him. Unfavorable reports of the character of his self-elected tenants may have influenced this decision. The Utters were one of those lawless, disreputable families often found hanging about the outskirts of civilization. Charges of petty pilfering and even of highway robbery were alleged against them, and at about the time that Belcher took back his land deed, Jabez Utter was arraigned before the County Court at New London, for stealing “a two-year-old black horse from Daniel Cady.” He was declared guilty and sentenced to pay Cady ten pounds and the horse; if unable to pay, make satisfaction by service at the rate of eight pounds a year: also, to pay the County Treasury forty shillings or be whipt ten stripes on his naked body, and also pay the charge of his prosecution, and stand committed till said charge be paid. His wife Mary, a woman of great spirit and resolution, remained in charge of their little home in the wilderness, and when summoned by Captain Chandler to relinquish it, positively declined to yield possession. Captain Chandler brought a suit in the name of Mr. Belcher, “that the said Jabez Utter do deliver one hundred acres of land,” and went on with the survey and division of Mortlake. A highway was laid out from north to south. Two noble farms or manors, called Kingswood and Wiltshire, were laid out for Mr. Belcher’s own occupation.

"For the promoting of public good and the better settling of the land," large tracts were sold—fourteen hundred acres on the Quinebaug to Governor Saltonstall, five hundred acres to Samuel Williams of Roxbury and three hundred to Mr. Belcher's brother-in-law, William Foye. A public training-field was reserved between one of Foye's farms and Nantasket Brook. About twelve hundred acres were left in forest and meadow for future disposal.

PLOT OF MORTLAKE.



*k.* Kingswood. *t.* Training-field. *f.* Foy's land. *s.* Saltonstall's tract. *w.* Wiltshire. *x.* William's land. *v.* Vacant. *r.* Road to Woodstock. *g.* Quinebaug River. *m.* Mashamoquet.

The laying out of Mortlake was accomplished in 1714, but before its farms and manors were made over to the several owners it was necessary to free it from all incumbrance. The Court had judged, that Utter should give up to Belcher "land and appurtenances, houses, fences and other improvements," and he had "surrendered by yielding the lease." The sheriff of New London County was sent to demand possession of the premises of Mary Utter, but the fearless frontier-woman had barricaded doors and windows, and resolutely refused compliance. Seeing no resource but forcible ejection, Captain Chandler entrusted the affair to his oldest son, John, then just of age, who accepted the commission with great alacrity. News of the coming contest spread through all the surrounding country and all the wild young fellows in the different towns hastened to join in this raid upon the one lone Mortlake woman. On the 19th of January, 1715, a great company came to the little log hut in the clearing—young Chandler with the sheriff; Edward Morris, Jahn Frizzle and Jacob Parker from Woodstock; James Danielson,



Jun., from Killingly; David Bishop and Benjamin Franklyn, from Pomfret; Samuel and John Rice, from Ashford; John Pelton and Jeremiah Plimpton from Canterbury, and others—bringing with them drums, clubs, axes and all things needful for a siege. Though her husband was in prison and a family of little children around her, Mary Utter was ready to resist them. The sheriff again demanded possession and declared, "That if she did not surrender he would besiege her to death. Mrs. Utter replied that she did not care for him or his authority. 'Yesterday,' says young Chandler, 'the sheriff made demand on Captain Belcher's account, with an execution, but now I am come on *my father's* account to make demand of it, and *will have it*, else we'll starve you to death, and your daughters shall die in the house.'"

Even this fearful threat, and the dreaded name and authority of Captain John Chandler, did not daunt the stout heart of Mary Utter, whereupon the young men proceeded to pull down her fences and put up a fort or barricade to command both doors, from which they battered the house with stones and other missiles, and becoming more and more uproarious with drink and frolic, "set up ensigns or banners, colors of divers sorts, one of red and another of blue, upon their fort, and said they did it in defiance of King George, and drank a health to King James," and went about beating their drums, shouting and carousing till late in the night, committing "many high and heinous enormities, treasons, profaneness and other grievous wickedness," "and once," says poor Mary, "as I looked out of the window, John Pelton, like an inhuman bruit, spat in my face, and the others laughed at it." After a brief interval of comparative quiet about midnight, "as it grew towards the latter part of the night they revived their noise," and marched round and round the house, beating their drums and singing psalm-tunes, and presently young Chandler made proclamation, "That now we have got the victory! now the day was our own!"—whereupon they raised poles against the house and Chandler, Pelton and Edward Morris vaulted on top and came down through the chimney into the chamber, opened the doors, and admitted the sheriff, who thus at length gained forcible possession of the little log-house so valiantly defended by its mistress. Even then, Mary Utter would not quit without a struggle, and had to be pushed and dragged and flung down backward out of the door, but in the afternoon, she tells us, her assailants finally conquered and "drove me away from my home, and drove my children with me into the wilderness, and set a guard about me till near sun-set, and then left us there to perish without any shelter but the heavens, nor anything to refresh nature." How she obtained relief and shelter does not appear. Perhaps she found her way through the woods to

the hospitable house of Richard Adams, or some chance traveler may have aided her to Edward Spalding's. However this may have been, two days later, January 21, 1715, she was able to tell her pitiful story to a magistrate and as "his Majesty's distressed, forlorn subject," enter complaint against the various parties concerned in her ejection. In the May following, her complaint was brought before the General Assembly, and the Worshipful Captain Bushnell ordered, "to inquire into the premises and proceed against the offenders according to law," but as the leaders in the affair were without the limits of Connecticut no action was taken. Jabez Utter, after lying in prison a considerable time, and "not getting any way to answer the charges of his prosecution for horse-stealing," was allowed to work them out in the service of Elisha Paine for eight pounds a year, and when that was served out, he was delivered over to Daniel Cady, according to sentence. A suit subsequently brought against him, "for taking up public land in Canterbury," is the latest record concerning the first white inhabitant of Mortlake.

A more serious obstacle to the settlement of Mortlake was its political status. The right of jurisdiction was transferred with the land title, and Belcher's purchase recognized as a distinct township by the Government, but this separate independent township was included within the limits of another distinct township. The original south bound of Pomfret crossed Gray Mare Hill, and was afterwards removed a mile southward. To remedy the difficulties occasioned by this complication, Mr. Belcher proposed to annex his township to Pomfret on the following conditions:—

1. That his two farms should be called Kingswood and Wiltshire.
2. That he and his heirs male be made capable of serving, if chosen by Pomfret, as deputies, although not actually resident.
3. That the inhabitants of his land, for encouragement of keeping good houses of entertainment, be free from impost.
4. That the same should be exempt or discharged from offices of charge in the town of Pomfret, or Colony of Connecticut.
5. That one of the said inhabitants shall always be—if he will accept it—a townsman or selectmen, provided that when there is more than one, Pomfret shall elect whichever they please.
6. In all votes or meetings of town, Mortlake proprietors shall have a right of voting according to the proportion said manors bear to town in quantity of land—the petitioner having so paid his proportion of charge towards the settlement of Pomfret.
7. The inhabitants of Mortlake, as to militia, to be solely depending on the government of the Colony.
8. That no person shall have liberty of hunting.
9. Though the six thousand acres have been voted by the Hon. Court to be a township, in and of itself, by name of Mortlake—yet, for the encouragement of Pomfret, the petitioner now desires that the same be annexed to Pomfret, and always for the future be and remain a part of that town."

This proposition was laid before the inhabitants of Pomfret at a town-meeting, October 4, 1714, who agreed to it, and consented that

Mr. Belcher should apply to the General Court for confirmation. The Upper House granted his prayer with several exceptions and emendations; the Lower House consented only to the first and last articles. Mr. Belcher, thereupon, the same day, October 14, declared :—

“That your memorialist having purchased, with a considerable sum of money, a tract of land belonging to Captain John Blackwell, which he had held with ye privilege of township by ye name of Mortlake by an act of this Colony, and being willing, for encouragement of the town of Pomfret, to which said Mortlake lies very convenient to be annexed, to part with and disclaim all such privileges as now do or may hereafter appertain to it did, in petition, declare my consent that the said Mortlake should be annexed to and become a part of Pomfret, upon certain conditions, desiring that some small part of these privileges, which he might more fully have claimed in said Mortlake had he reserved and kept it distinct from Pomfret—might be secured to him by act of Assembly, within said town. And your memorialist, having full consent of ye town of Pomfret, made no doubt but that the Assembly would easily have allowed him these privileges, upon his consenting that Mortlake should be entirely annexed to Pomfret and be divested of the name and privilege of a township formally annexed to it—which the memorialist was more willingly induced to do by a representation made to him by the town of Pomfret, that unless the said Mortlake was added to their town they should not be able to carry on the necessary affairs of the town, or make a comfortable settlement there—but forasmuch as the Assembly has not thought fit to allow the said privilege, he cannot, without apparent wrong to himself and his heirs, forego the just rights he has to have and hold Mortlake as a distinct town, with all ye privilege appertaining to it as such, and for that end does in this manner lay before the Assembly his claim of right to Mortlake as a distinct township, made so by act of Assembly, thereby to obviate all inconvenience arising by any after act at the motion of Pomfret or any other person, for ye making of Mortlake to become a part of Pomfret or any other town, or to be brought under the laws, duties or regulations of ye same without consent of the memorialist, his heirs, &c. And, particularly, your memorialist must insist upon it and declare against it, as what he cannot but believe will be judged by all indifferent men as directly opposed to his just rights, that ye said Mortlake should for the future be reckoned or taken as any part of ye town of Pomfret—since all his transactions with, and concessions to, said Pomfret have been upon the supposition that the Assembly would allow him certain privileges, which would further oblige him to be, as he always is, with the greatest regard and respect,—Your most obedient,  
JONATHAN BELCHER.”

This forcible representation called out from the Lower House the resolution, “That the vote of both houses granting the first and last condition, be not improved to the prejudice of Mr. Belcher.” Further negotiations were held with Pomfret. A letter was sent to the selectmen of that town, renewing the offer to unite the township of Mortlake to their town forever, upon receiving certain privileges for his farms or manors. A town-meeting was called, December 27, 1714, when the demand was considered and fully debated, and, by a very clear vote, it was decided :—

“That, on condition the town of Mortlake be united to this town forever, to be always hereafter one entire township, to be called Pomfret, the town unanimously consent and agree that the inhabitants of Kingswood and Wiltshire shall enjoy the following privileges, viz. :—

I. The privilege of voting in any town-meeting about town affairs, according to the proportion the said farms bear to said town in quantity of land, it being as one to fifteen.

II. That no vote of the town shall conclude any inhabitant of the manor to any chargeable or burdensome public office unless they be willing to accept the same, saving one selectman out of Kingswood.

III. The militia to depend solely on the Governor of the Colony."

These conditions were not accepted. The privilege of voting in town-meeting as one to fifteen, did not appear to Mr. Belcher a sufficient compensation for the loss of jurisdiction, and so the matter rested. Mortlake was left in its original status, as manorial property, with the rights and privileges of a township; its government vested in an individual and not in a corporation. The land south of it included in the township patented to Captain Blackwell, was divided between Canterbury and Pomfret in 1714.

## XXIX.

### MINISTER AND MEETING-HOUSE. CHURCH ORGANIZATION. SECOND LAND DIVISION.

**T**HE first care of Pomfret, after securing confirmation of bounds, was to settle religious worship. October 28, 1713, the town voted:—

"To give an orthodox minister, such an one as shall be acceptable to the people, one hundred and fifty pounds in money for and towards buying his land and building his house; also, to break up four acres of land and plant two with an orchard; and for his salary, fifty-five pounds in money for the first year, until such time as there shall be sixty families settled in the town, and then seventy pounds a year ever after, so long as he shall continue his ministerial relations to us—and Ebenezer Sabin and Samuel Warner are chosen to go and bring a minister to preach and settle here. And it is voted, in the first place, that they shall make their application to Mr. Ebenezer Williams of Roxbury, and show him a copy of the votes respecting the settling of a minister here, and if he will accept of what is offered and come and be our minister, they shall seek no further; but if he may not be prevailed upon to come, then they shall make their address to such others as shall seem advisable."

In pursuance of their commission, Messrs. Sabin and Warner hastened to wait upon Mr. Williams, but he, "being newly come off from a journey, could not be prevailed upon to come," whereat the town, November 19, "expressing their great value for the said Mr. Williams, desired he might be further addressed by letter, to come and preach with us for the space of six months." This invitation was accepted, and, December 23, 1713, Mr. Williams arrived in Pomfret and began his ministrations, and soon made himself so agreeable to the people that long before the six months had expired, they were every way willing to accept of him for their minister. His boarding-place was with Captain John Sabin, in the northeastern corner of the town, then, according to tradition, the only framed house in the settlement.



Public religious services were held on the Sabbath in some convenient residence. December 22, 1713, the town voted, "That there should be a meeting-house built with all convenient speed." Deacon Benjamin Sabin, Captain John Sabin and Philemon Chandler were chosen committee in that behalf, with ample power in all respects. February 16, 1714, voted, "That the meeting-house shall be set on White's Plain, at such part of it as the committee hereinafter named shall determine, viz.: Captain and Deacon Sabin, Cornet Sawyer, Nathaniel Gary, Leicester Grosvenor, Abiel Lyon, Nathaniel Sessions, Ebenezer Truesdell and Joseph Chandler." At the same meeting, a formal call was given to Mr. Williams, the people agreeing, "that if the said Mr. Williams doth like the town, and will and shall settle here in the work of the gospel ministry, they will give him one hundred and seventy pounds in money, towards buying his land and building his house, and for his salary sixty pounds yearly, for four years, and after that to rise twenty shillings yearly until it shall come to seventy pounds, and there to stand so long as he shall continue his ministerial labors among us." And, Mr. Williams being personally present, for several weighty and serious considerations, him thereunto moving, "freely, faithfully and sincerely promised to settle in Pomfret in the work of the ministry, and endeavor to discharge aright all the duties belonging to his profession." Two hundred acres of land, reserved for the encouragement of preaching, were made over to Mr. Williams, June, 1714, by James Fitch, Samuel Ruggles and the other Mashamoquet proprietors, each one a proportionable share.

Having thus liberally provided for their pastor, the people engaged with great spirit in building their meeting-house. Early in the spring the work was inaugurated. Some of the building committee, "finding it difficult to discharge their duty in that respect by reason of living remote and out of the way, so that others were exposed to and overburthened with an over proportion of care and trouble"—Leicester Grosvenor and Samuel Warner were joined with them. A rate of three hundred pounds was voted to defray the charges of building. A single hand was allowed two and sixpence a day and subsist himself; a man and team, for ordinary work, five and sixpence a day; for going to Ashford or Stoddard's Cedar Swamp, eight shillings per day. The house was raised April 27, and covered during the summer. It stood on the east side of the road, about a quarter of a mile south of the site of the present Congregational Church edifice. A burial spot, adjacent, was selected by an especial committee. At a town meeting, August 27, 1714, it was voted, "That the meeting-house shall be carried no further at present than to have the floor laid, the pulpit set up, the doors made and hung, the windows finished, and the body of

seats and the minister's pew made. Fifty pounds were added to the rate to be levied.

"Voted, That Mr. Belcher shall have liberty to build a pew in our meeting-house, next ye pulpit, at ye west end of it.

That Captain Chandler (John of Woodstock) shall have liberty to build a pew at the northwest corner of our meeting-house.

It was also considered, that Captain Sabin shall have liberty to build for himself a pew in some convenient place in the meeting-house.

Also, that Lieutenant Samuel Williams have the same privilege."

In the autumn, the house was completed so far as had been specified, and was probably opened for public worship and town-meetings. December 6, 1714, various new officers were chosen. Deacon Sabin, Ensign Grosvenor, Cornet Sawyer, Jonathan Hide and Nathaniel Gary were appointed selectmen; Nathaniel Sessions, constable and tavern-keeper; Benjamin Sitton, collector; Philemon Chandler, grand-juror; Joseph Tucker and Samuel Carpenter, fence-viewers; William and Samuel Gary, listers; Nathaniel Johnson, sealer; John Hubbard was ordered to build a strong pound for horses. During this winter, town-meetings were infrequent and ill attended, so that in March, 1715, it was found needful to vote that, "insomuch as the inhabitants in time past have wholly failed in attendance or come very unseasonably, and others, loth to act without the conference of their neighbors, have long waited until there was not time orderly to dispatch business, therefore, that so many as assemble within half an hour after the time prefixed may proceed to business, and the laws as binding as if all were present." It was also voted, "That non-residents that own land shall have free liberty to vote at our town-meetings in all matters that concern them." The military company had now been fully organized, with John Sabin for captain, Philemon Chandler for lieutenant and Leicester Grosvenor for ensign, and the latter gentleman, "chosen and pitched upon to treat with Windham gentlemen about the line and bounds of our township." All other public matters were deferred till the completion of the meeting-house.

May 9, 1715, the town voted, "That the space in the meeting-house at the west end, between the stairs and door, be a place for boys to sit in. Also, that Lieutenant Chandler shall have liberty to build a pew for himself and family in our meeting-house, at the south side, between the great door and the next window. Also, that Benjamin Sitton shall have liberty to build a pew for himself and family in the meeting-house, adjoining to the east of Lieutenant Chandler's. Also, granted liberty to Messrs. James Danielson, Senior and Junior, to build a pew at the south side of the meeting-house, to the west of the great door. Also, that Edward Payson shall have liberty to build a pew next to Mr. Danielson's, between that and the stairs, provided that they all finish them by the last of September next, and take in and cause all

their families to sit there, if it may be with convenience. Two thousand feet of boards were also voted for and towards building the meeting-house.

May 19, Deacon Sabin, Lieutenant Chandler, Samuel Warner, Ensign Grosvenor, Abiel Lyon and Jonathan Hide, were chosen a committee to treat with Mr. Williams about his ordination. September 14, voted, "That the ordination of Mr. Williams be on the 26th day of October. Also, that an ordination dinner be provided for forty persons, viz.: ministers and messengers of the churches. Also, that the aforesaid gentlemen be entertained as much as necessary before ordination at the town's charge. Also, that Deacon Sabin, Samuel Warner, Edward Payson, Jonathan Hide, Nath. Sessions and Ebenezer Truesdell, be a committee to take care that a good dinner be provided, and all things carried on in good order." These arrangements being perfected and liberty received from the General Court, the church was organized, October 26, 1715, and Ebenezer Williams ordained as its pastor, but unfortunately no record of the proceedings, of the day was preserved. The occasion was one of great interest and joyfulness, and doubtless drew together a large concourse of people. The young pastor was already greatly beloved by his flock and much respected throughout the adjoining region. He was the son of Samuel Williams of Roxbury, and nephew of the Reverend John Williams of Deerfield, so noted for his captivity by the Indians. He was graduated from Harvard in 1709, and was twenty-five years of age at the time of his settlement. Eleven of the male residents of Pomfret joined with Mr. Williams in church fellowship. Benjamin Sabin and Philemon Chandler were elected its deacons. The "good dinner" ordered for the forty ministers and messengers was provided by Captain John Sabin, who received from the town, "ten pounds in money in the whole" for payment. In the following May, a rate of £130 was ordered, for and towards defraying charge of the meeting-house. December, 1716, a committee was chosen for fencing in the meeting-house. It was also agreed, that the meeting-house should be seated according to the rates they have paid—having respect to age and dignity, Ensign Grosvenor, Deacon Philemon Chandler and Edward Payson, committee. Also, "that Nathaniel Gary should have liberty to build a house in the highway for himself and family to sit in Sabba-days." This "Sabba-day-house" accorded to Mr. Gary is the only one known within Windham County limits, though they were not uncommon in other parts of New England. It was a small house built tight and warm, with an ample fire-place and a few seats and benches. Fuel was kept in readiness and a fire kindled by the first comers on Sunday morning, and there Mr. Gary and his family and

other friends and neighbors could warm and refresh themselves after their cold, bleak ride before assembling for worship in the fireless, freezing meeting-house. At noon-time they gathered again in the cozy room for warmth and lunch, and again after service to prepare for the journey homeward.

Having thus satisfactorily provided for their spiritual wants, the inhabitants of Pomfret turned their attention to secular affairs. The next thing needful after a meeting-house was facilities for reaching it, and those of Pomfret were most lamentably deficient. No roads had been regularly laid out by town authorities and the only means of communication were rough bridle-paths. The Mashamoquet proprietors had the entire control of their lands, comprising more than half the inhabited land of the town, and to them belonged the care of making roads through their property. Only half the Purchase was as yet laid out to them; the remainder was lying in common, undivided and uncultivated. A new division was proposed with suitable highways, and after long preliminary discussion, a proprietors' meeting was held in Pomfret, November 1, 1716—the first recorded after the distribution of 1694. Ten "whole shares men," were present. Some new proprietors appeared—Captain John Chandler of Woodstock, on the right of Samuel Gore; Captain John Sabin on that of Samuel Ruggles; Edmond Weld for John White. After considerable discussion the following votes were passed:—

- “1. That the meeting is legal.
2. That our second division shall be in not less than three parcels or lots and more at discretion of committee.
3. That all the highways shall continue and be confirmed and that each lot shall have a highway to it—said highway six rods wide from north to south, and four rods from east to west.
4. The committee shall survey our whole purchase and settle the bounds of the fifteen thousand one hundred acres.
5. The committee shall state needful highways to each lot in second division, not above four rods wide.
6. That Philemon Chandler shall be proprietors' clerk.
7. That Captain John Sabin, Leicester Grosvenor, Mr. Timothy Ruggles, (and in case of their death or impossibility of attendance), William Sharpe, be the committee to act the business voted on at this meeting.
8. Second division to be ready by December 1.
9. Highways altered at discretion.
10. The committee have power to decide all particulars, which we have not before the breaking up of this meeting.
11. Are to make out four hundred acres a share if possible; if not to seek after the lost land.
12. Whole proprietors are to stand law-suits.
13. Captain Chandler, Mr. Dana and the heirs of Captain Samuel Ruggles to have fifteen shillings apiece for being committee last year.
14. That the committee have four shillings per day and pay for chairman and surveyor, all under oath.
15. That Mr. Williams' grant be added to our share in the plot.
16. That the proprietors that dwell in Pomfret, on condition that the Roxbury proprietors will leave the writings at Pomfret shall have attested copies of writings from time to time at the cost of Pomfret proprietors, sent to Edmund Weld of Roxbury.
17. Timothy Ruggles to draw all the votes.”



The time allotted for the new division was found quite insufficient. The lost land was not recovered without great difficulty. The western bound of the purchase had never been accurately defined and some of the original lots had been over-measured. A meeting of Mashamoquet proprietors was held, April 10, 1718, at the house of Nathaniel Sessions, tavern-keeper. Ensign Grosvenor was chosen moderator, John Chandler, Jun., was appointed surveyor and directed to join with Nathaniel Sessions, James Corbin and Ebenezer Sabin, in running the extreme bounds of the tract and see what was to lay out. The shares accruing to Major Fitch, to be laid out "adjoining to land Samuel Warren now lives on." Surveyor to have ten shillings a day and each of the committee, five. The survey was made according to direction, Mr. Corbin assisting on account of his owning the land west in Ashford. This western bound has not been completely identified, but it was parallel with the western bound of the town and not far removed from it. October 22, the committee reported, "That the quantity of land expressed in the deed from Major Fitch would fall short of y<sup>e</sup> complement if the lines be restrained to six miles south from north bounds and will not yield four hundred acres to each share, and that they had accordingly drawn a plot which would carry the purchase to Mr. Stoddard's south tract." The plot was exhibited and gave satisfaction—the proprietors voting, "To take the land according to plot exhibited, and that what land lies south of six miles from north bounds, be laid out in twelve equal shares, and that the lots formerly laid out be again surveyed, and if too great, allowance to be made." Charge for surveying was to be paid by each proprietor in equal proportions—none having any benefit from the division till they had paid their part of the charge. The division thus ordered was completed during the winter and distributed May 13, 1719, by lot, in the following order:—

1. John Sabin on right of Samuel Ruggles.
2. Daniel Dana and Company.
3. Joseph Chandler—on right of Deacon John Chandler.
4. John Mowrey, on right of Thomas Mowrey, deceased.
5. William Sharpe for John Ruggles heirs.
6. Captain John Chandler on right of Samuel Gore.
7. Edmond Weld for John White.
8. Ebenezer Sabin on right of Deacon Benjamin Sabin.
9. Thomas Ruggles for Captain Samuel Ruggles.
10. Ensign Leicester Grosvenor.
11. Joseph Otis for John Gore.
12. Joseph Griffin.

The charge for this survey, division and plot was £51. 1s. which was divided among the proprietors and paid before the lots were drawn. Of the twelve original proprietors of Mashamoquet none were now living, but Benjamin Sabin and Joseph Griffin. Of the twelve recipients of the second division, only Captain Sabin, Joseph Chandler,

Ebenezer Sabin and Leicester Grosvenor were, apparently, then residents of Pomfret, though Joseph Griffin, and Samuel and Isaac, sons of Jacob and Benjamin Dana, soon afterward removed there. This second division was laid out in the west of the town, and is now included in the parish of Abington.

### XXX.

NEW INHABITANTS. IMPROVEMENTS. SOUTH ADDITION.  
PETER DAVISON.

THE opening of new territory was followed by a fresh influx of population. Sales and transfers of land became more frequent, and many families were added to the settlement. Jonathan Hide, William Hamlet, Abiel Cheney, Jonathan Dana, Archibald McCoy, Ebenezer Holbrook, Jehoshaphat Holmes, Samuel Perrin and Daniel Waldo appear as residents of Pomfret, prior to 1720 ; William Sharpe, Samuel Sumner, John and James Ingalls, soon after that date. Hide bought Purchase land of Truesdell ; Hamlet removed from Woburn to an allotment laid out to Samuel Ruggles, comprising the hill still known as Hamlet's ; Cheney's first residence was south of the Mashamoquet, on land bought of Major Fitch, east of Newichewanna Brook ; Holmes was still farther southward. McCoy's homestead was the fifth lot of the square, bought of Captain John Sabin in 1716 ; Waldo's, east side of the highway, farther northward, on land bought of Captain Chandler. A beautiful triangular farm, bordering on the Mashamoquet, laid out first to Samuel Gore and sold successively to Captain John Chandler, Thomas Hutchinson and Francis Clark, was purchased by John Holbrook of Roxbury, whose son, Ebenezer, took possession of it in 1719. The Perrin farm on the Quinebaug, early secured by Samuel of Woodstock, was occupied first by his son Samuel, who there built, it is said, in 1714, the fine mansion so long known as "the old Perrin House." Jonathan Dresser, brother to Richard of Nashaway, bought land of Nathaniel Gary in 1717. About 1720, William Sharpe with his wife Abigail, daughter of John White, one of the original proprietors of Mashamoquet, and their seven sons, three daughters and a daughter's husband—Samuel Gridley—removed to Pomfret, settling upon a second-division lot between Goodell's and Grosvenor's in what is now the north part of Abington. Two years later, Samuel Sumner, son of George Sumner of Roxbury, took possession of the sixth lot of the square, purchased of Captain Sabin—building his house near the site of the present Quaker meeting-house, and marrying Elizabeth Griffin,

probably daughter of Joseph, the Mashamoquet proprietor. The young Ingalls brothers, who came up with their widowed mother, Hannah Ingalls from Andover, bought a second-division lot in the southwest of the Purchase, and made them a home in the depths of the wilderness. Joseph Craft appears at about this date as a resident of the west part of Pomfret. It is quite possible that his land was secured by an early grant from Major Fitch, as the name of Samuel Craft appears among the original grantees of the town and no subsequent deed has been discovered. Some sales of land were also made to non-residents. Several tracts were sold by Captain Chandler to Jonathan Waldo of Boston. Eight hundred acres of second-division land, south of the Mashamoquet and west of Newichewanna Brook were sold by Major Fitch in 1714, to John Dyer of Canterbury, and by him conveyed to Col. Thomas Fitch of Boston. The strip of land west of the Purchase, embracing about two thousand acres, was made over by Major Fitch to his son Daniel in 1719. The market price of the Pomfret land varied greatly in different localities. Holbrook's four hundred acres cost him as many pounds; Sumner's purchase was more than a pound and a half an acre; Hamlet's but half a pound; Dyer for eight hundred acres gave a hundred and twenty pounds, while a hundred and forty acres in the southwest corner of the town was secured by Samuel Pellet for ten pounds.

These new inhabitants of Pomfret were mostly men of character and property, and at once identified themselves with the growth of the town. Jehoshaphat Holmes was soon chosen town-clerk, Samuel Gridley served as clerk both for town and proprietors, Abiel Cheney was licensed as tavern-keeper, Sharpe, Holbrook and other new inhabitants were appointed to various public services, and "Father Coy" opened his house for public meetings. Several weighty matters were now under consideration. Efforts had long been made to secure better traveling communication with Providence, the most accessible market-town for this section. The existing bridle-path could not accommodate teams or vehicles. The building a sufficient cart-road was a very laborious enterprise, far greater than the construction of a modern railroad. Eastward of Killingly the country was for many miles savage and unbroken, a rude, rocky, sterile wilderness. The movement was initiated in 1708, and the road completed and opened in 1721, under the supervision of Nathaniel Sessions, who himself brought over it the first load of West India goods to Pomfret. The road, like the path preceding it, crossed the Quinebaug just below the Falls at the old fording-place first opened by Peter Aspinwall, who, soon after 1700, begged the privilege of building a bridge there. Another attempt was made a few years later to

bridge this formidable stream, and a petition sent to the General Assembly by Philemon Chandler, Leicester Grosvenor, Nathaniel Sessions and others, showing that the fording-place was often dangerous and sometimes impassable, but no relief was granted. Captain John Sabin next took the matter in hand, and with the aid of his son, achieved a substantial bridge "over the Quinebaug at y<sup>e</sup> falls near Pomfret, in 1722." Joshua Ripley and Timothy Pierce were appointed by the General Court to view this bridge, who reported it "built in a suitable place, out of danger of being carried away by floods or ice, the highth of the bridge being above any flood yet known by any man living there, and think it will be very serviceable to a great part of the government in traveling to Boston—being at least ten miles the nearest way according to their judgment." The cost of this bridge was £120, for which three hundred acres of land in the common lands, on the east side of Connecticut River, were allowed Captain Sabin, "on condition he keep the same in repair four-teen years next coming."

The first representative sent by Pomfret to the General Assembly was Deacon Benjamin Sabin, in May, 1719. His son Ebenezer was sent in the following October; Daniel Waldo in 1720; Captain John Sabin was sent in October, 1720, and several years afterwards, accompanied successively by Abiel Lyon, Nathaniel Johnson, William Sharpe, Benjamin and Eleazer Sabin. Captain Sabin was appointed a justice of the peace in 1724. Pomfret's list of estates, presented in 1723, amounted to £5,588.

In the matter of schools, Pomfret showed great remissness, making no public provision for them till January 28, 1720, when the town voted to have a school-house.

- "1. Set up near the meeting-house.
2. Twenty-four feet by ninteteen and seven feet stud.
3. To stand north of the pound, within ten rods of it.
4. To be finished by next Michaelmas-come-twelve-month, which will be in the year of our Lord, 1721. Ebenezer Grosvenor, Abiel Lyon and Nathaniel Sessions, committee."

This vote was not carried out. The Michaelmas of 1721, found no school-house in progress. Difficulties had arisen. One school-house for the whole town was thought insufficient. The settlers south of Mortlake asked for their share of the money separate; the northern inhabitants also preferred nearer accommodations. After three years delay the house was begun as specified in the vote, but in April, 1723, the town voted, "That the school-house shall not be finished." This decision was strongly opposed by a large minority. A protest showing that a rate had been made and paid by most, and that the subscribers looked upon it but reasonable that the money should be used for the



end called for, was signed by Philemon Chandler, Jonathan Hide, Samuel Dana, Abiel Lyon, Ebenezer Holbrook, Samuel Paine, Joseph and Nathaniel Sessions, James Taylor, William Hamlet, Joseph Griffin, Joseph Craft, Archibald McCoy, William Sharpe, Seth Paine and others. In August another meeting was held and the matter satisfactorily adjusted. It was voted :—

“1. That the school-house shall be finished with all convenient speed.

2. Query. Whether the town will agree upon this method as to the places where the school shall be kept in the town; namely: that the school be kept one-half of the time in the school-house already built, and the other half of the time some where farther northward, in some house which that neighborhood shall provide and the whole maintained in the same public manner? Answer; Yes.

3. Query. Whether the town will allow those that live south of Governor Saltonstall's land, their proportion of rate . . . towards building a school-house for themselves, provided they first erect a school-house; also their proportion of all rates that shall hereafter be made towards the maintenance, provided they keep a school among themselves? Answer; Yes.”

Ebenezer Sabin, Jonathan Hide and William Sharpe were appointed a committee to see the school-house finished. Schools were thus simultaneously established in the north, south and centre of the town, and provision made for raising money for their support according to law. The train-band company had been previously re-organized. “March 11, 1721. By virtue of an order from the Governor—the soulderie of the town of Pomfret on a public training-day, made choice of a lieutenant and ensign to fill up the vacancy occasioned by the dismission of Lieut. Philemon Chandler, who for some years had been chosen and served in that ‘office.” Leicester Grosvenor was accordingly chosen lieutenant; Nath. Sessions, ensign.

Various minor matters were also considered and settled. A rate of three pounds was allowed for procuring weights and measures and a black staff. A penny a head was allowed for destroying blackbirds; twopence each for squirrels, woodpeckers and blue jays, and twopence a tail for rattlesnakes,—Nathaniel Sessions, William Williams, Samuel Gridley and Jehoshaphat Holmes, to receive and keep an account of the creatures destroyed. A larger number of town officers was now needed and elected. In December, 1724, the selectmen chosen were Captain John Sabin, Leicester Grosvenor, Nathaniel Johnson, Ebenezer Sabin and Nathaniel Sessions. For constable, Ebenezer Truesdell; grand-juror, Richard Adams; collectors, Joseph Sessions and Ezekiel Cady; listers, Samuel Warner, Abiel Cheney and Samuel Dana; surveyors, Benjamin Sabin and Samuel Paine.

Little is known of church affairs, owing to the entire lack of records. Mr. Williams retained the affection and respect of his people, and was greatly esteemed for his learning, wisdom and piety. His congregation was large, embracing all the inhabitants of the town, and the church

probably received many accessions. After the erection of the second society of Windham, some of the southwest inhabitants of Pomfret were allowed to unite with it, and a petition was presented, "by our Christian neighbors in Windham village, for a strip of land in our township, which was bordering on their precincts, which was so far answered as y<sup>t</sup> the town chose two persons to view the same and report to the town." The meeting-house still required attention. The offer of a bell from Mr. Jonathan Belcher in 1719, called out the vote, "That there should be a bell cony [balcony] built at one end of the meeting-house, and preparations made for the hanging of a bell which Mr. Jonathan Belcher offers to bestow upon the town." For some unexplained cause the gift was not received, and Pomfret missed the honor of having the first church bell in Windham County. In 1721, liberty was granted to Nathaniel Sessions and Ebenezer Grosvenor to build each, a pew at the east end of the meeting-house. In 1722, the house was re-seated—the town voting, "That the second seat in the body of the meeting house and the fore-seat in the front gallery shall be judged and esteemed equal in dignity; and that the third seat in the body and the fore-seat of the side gallery shall be equal; the fourth seat in the body and the second seat in the front gallery shall be equal; and that the governing rule in seating the meeting house shall be, the first three rates which are made in the town on the last year's list, having respect also to age and dignity." Provision was also made for the comfort of horses, inhabitants having liberty to build stables near the meeting-house on the north side of the same. Fines due the town were ordered, "to be improved to repair the glass of the meeting-house and any other repair that shall be found necessary," and a five-pound rate allowed to defray the expense of repairing and finishing the seats.

Pomfret, for a time, was so remarkably healthy that, in five years, the only deaths occurring were those of three infants, so that the burial-ground by the meeting house was scarcely made use of. In 1719, the town voted, "That the burying-place be removed to a more convenient place," and accepted the gift of two acres of land for this use and service, bounded north by Wappaquians Brook and east by the highway, from Deacon Philemon Chandler. The first person interred in the new ground is believed to have been Joseph Griffin, one of the original Mashamoquet proprietors, in 1723. He was followed, in 1725, by Deacon Benjamin Sabin, an early Woodstock pioneer, and one of the most useful and respected citizens of Pomfret.

The condition of Pomfret highways was still unsatisfactory. Within the bounds of the Purchase, they were managed by its proprietors, without, by the town authorities, and harmony of action was not

always attainable. After much deliberation, it was thought expedient to resign title and management into the hands of the town. A special proprietors' meeting, warned by Justice Leavens of Killingly, in January, 1726, was held March 6, "at the school-house near the sign-post." Those present were Captain John, Benjamin and Ebenezer Sabin, John, Leicester and Ebenezer Grosvenor, Philemon and Joseph Chandler, William Sharpe and Edmond Weld, heirs of John White and Samuel Dana. Captain John Sabin was chosen moderator; Samuel Gridley chosen clerk by the major part of the proprietors and sworn by Justice Leavens. After considering a method to settle highways for the good of the town of Pomfret and issuing present difficulties, the proprietors agreed as follows:—

"1. To give and make over to said town all and singular highways laid out in Purchase in first and second divisions, said town to hold the same forever, and proprietors to quit their rights, under the following restrictions.

1. Any of said ways to be changed or altered, selectmen approving.

2. That, notwithstanding ways were laid out at first six rods wide, all shall be but four hereafter, save from meeting-house to school-house, standing by meeting-house and south from meeting-house to the corner of Father Coy's land, which shall remain six, and upon Wappaquians Brook, for the convenience of the burying-place—and the two rods taken from ways shall be divided among owners, save against Major Fitch's land, when it shall accrue to the proprietors and not to Major Fitch.

3. All ways running from east to west shall be four rods wide, save one or two."

The highway question being thus settled, all previous divisions of land were confirmed and established by unanimous vote of the proprietors.

Mortlake, during this period, made little progress. Houses were built within the manors, and part of the land brought under cultivation. Wiltshire was rented to Henry Earle. Five hundred acres in Kingswood, with buildings, white servant, four oxen, four cows, two breeding mares, thirty sheep, harrow, plough, chains and cart, were leased by Mr. Belcher to Isaiah and Thompson Wood of Canterbury. That Mr. Belcher made even a summer residence of his farms is extremely doubtful, but he may have occasionally visited them and retained the oversight and management of them. The pew built by him in Pomfret meeting-house was probably occupied by his tenants. The bell offered by him failed, as we have seen, to reach it. The land purchased by Saltonstall and Foye was for some years unoccupied. Samuel Williams, brother of the Rev. Ebenezer, had, like Belcher, a pew spot assigned him in Pomfret meeting-house, but never became a permanent resident. His younger brother, William, purchased of Belcher a farm west of Wiltshire, in 1719, and took immediate possession of it. His family, with those of Belcher's tenants, were probably for many years the only white inhabitants of Mortlake.

In 1714, the vacant land between Pomfret and Canterbury was

divided between these townships, and thus the land south of Mortlake, owned by Adams, Chandler and Stoddard came under the jurisdiction of Pomfret. Richard Adams was chosen selectman in 1715, and, by a very clear vote, the town made over to him all their right and title to his land as to property. The settlement of this section was somewhat quickened by its annexation to Pomfret. Daniel Cady of Killingly, father of Mrs. Richard Adams, bought six hundred acres of land near Tatnick Hill, of Jabez Allen, in 1714, and settled there with a large family of sons and daughters. James Cady of Marlborough, purchased land of Richard Adams in 1716. John, Joseph and Daniel Adams then took possession of their allotments, and threw part of them into market. Sixty acres, now included in Brooklyn village, were sold by Joseph Adams in 1718, to Samuel Spalding. John Adams sold homesteads to Jabez Spicer and John Hubbard; Daniel Adams, a farm to Samuel Shead. The twenty-five hundred acres of land between the Adams and Stoddard tracts were sold by Captain Chandler for £190, to Joseph Otis of Scituate, in 1715. Its eastern half was sold out in farms to the Rev. Ebenezer Williams, Ebenezer Whiting, Samuel Spalding, Jonathan Cady and Josiah Cleveland, in 1719; the western half was purchased by Stephen Williams, Joseph Davison and Joseph Holland, in 1723. The Stoddard tract remained for many years in the hands of its non-resident owner, save a few hundred acres, sold in 1719 to Abiel Cheney, Benjamin Chaplin of Lynn, Samuel Gardner and Samuel Pellet. Chaplin and Pellet also purchased land of Major Fitch, and were the first settlers of the southwestern corner of Pomfret.

About twenty families had gathered in the south part of Pomfret by 1720. Their position was somewhat peculiar. A distinct, independent township lay between them and the main settlement, and had to be traversed by them on their way to public worship, town-meetings and trainings. The long journey over rough roads, which they had not the power to mend or alter, was "exceedingly difficult and next to impossible, and children were compelled a great part of the year to tarry at home on the Lord's day." Some of the residents of the south part of this region maintained church relations in Canterbury, so that the charge was divided between the Rev. Messrs. Williams and Estabrook, who visited the people, watched over them, and established a monthly lecture in the neighborhood, which was continued for some years, "but the good benefit thus accruing" made the hearers so much the more anxious to have the word of God dispensed more frequently, and in May, 1721, the following petition was presented to the Assembly, from the inhabitants north of Canterbury and south of Pomfret, showing:—

"That your memorialists are settled upon a tract of land three or four



miles wide and seven miles long, which, until late years, was never circumscribed within the bounds of any town, now divided between the two towns. That the families of said memorialists having grown more numerous than formerly, find it exceedingly difficult and next to impossible to attend worship with their families at the usual places, having many miles to travel, which, especially in the winter, is attended with great difficulty. That having been blessed by God in their outward circumstances, and in some good degree capable of taking care of themselves, and though a considerable charge to invite and settle an orthodox minister, yet the care of our children and families so requiring, your memorialists shall, with the greatest cheerfulness comply with the charge, and, therefore, pray that the inhabitants dwelling between the antient lines of the said towns of Canterbury and Pomfret may be a separate parish or precinct of preaching, as soon as they obtain a gospel minister to preach.

James Cady.	Ezra Cady.	Ebenezer Whiting.
Joseph Adams.	John Cady.	John Woodward.
Isaac Adams.	Daniel Cady, 2d.	Jabez Spicer.
Daniel Adams.	Samuel Spalding.	Jonas Spalding.
Richard Adams.	Isaac Allen.	John Hubbard.
John Adams.	Josiah Cleveland.	John Wilson.
Ezekiel Cady.	Joseph Holland.	Samuel Gates.
Daniel Cady.	Ezekiel Whitney.	Samuel Shead."
Jonathan Cady.	Henry Smith.	

To this earnest request, no answer was vouchsafed, and the memorialists were left to travel to their respective places of worship, while Chaplin and Gardner joined with "their Christian neighbors in Windham village." Undaunted by this failure, the south Pomfret residents next attempted to secure a separate military company, and a school in their own neighborhood. The school question was then greatly agitating Pomfret. The one school-house ordered by the town near the meeting-house, was deemed quite inadequate to the wants of a large township, and could not possibly be reached by children south of Mortlake. The inhabitants, assembled in public town-meeting, September 26, 1722, received the following communication:—

"Honored Gentlemen: We, ye inhabitants of Pomfret, south side of Gov. Saltonstall's land, humbly pray you to consider the great distance we live from the school-house now in building, and pray you to free us from the charge to school-house, and may have part of the money which comes from the treasury to keep a free school among ourselves.

Daniel Cady.	James Cady.	Richard Adams.
Samuel Shead.	Ezekiel Cady.	Samuel Gates.
Isaac Adams.	Joseph Adams.	

This request was graciously granted, and a school at once established. In October, 1723, "several persons living upon a tract of land between Canterbury and the south line of Pomfret, remote from the training place of either town," received liberty from the General Court to form a distinct train-band company by themselves. Samuel Spalding was confirmed as lieutenant and Richard Adams as ensign. October 13, 1724, Richard Adams, "for the love and good-will borne unto his well-beloved friends and neighbors, inhabitants of south addition to Pomfret and north addition to Canterbury, as also for the necessity of a convenient place for a training-field and the setting up of a school-house, did give and

grant, for the public use of a training-field, unto the aforesaid inhabitants and their heirs, a certain parcel of land lying within y<sup>e</sup> aforesaid additions, west of the country road, containing one acre." This land was laid out in the western part of Mr. Adams' allotment, a mile south-east of the site of Brooklyn village. At the same date, Daniel Cady, moved by the same considerations of love, good-will and affection and "the necessity of a convenient place to bury y<sup>e</sup> bodies of the dead among us," did give and grant a certain tract of land, east of Blackwell's Brook, "for y<sup>e</sup> public and necessary use of a convenient burying-place to the inhabitants of the additions aforesaid, and their heirs and assigns for ever." This gift was laid out as above designated, south of the site of the present Brooklyn village, and still forms a part of the Brooklyn burying-ground. With these improvements achieved, the inhabitants south of Mortlake were forced to rest in patience for further development.

Mortlake, itself, gave Pomfret much trouble. This intrusive, independent township was in a very lawless and unsettled condition. It had no town government, no selectmen, or other public officers, and all public improvements depended solely upon the pleasure of its owners. Though within the territory of Pomfret, it was entirely without its jurisdiction. Its inhabitants could neither vote, pay taxes, record deeds, or perform military service in Pomfret. This condition of affairs led to frequent disputes and collisions, and at length involved the town in a very burdensome and expensive lawsuit. One Peter Davison, a tenant of Belcher's, died on his farm after a brief residence, leaving a widow and idiot son of seventeen. It was a season of uncommon distress and scarcity. Drouth and frost had cut off the crops, and the destitute widow was unable to procure subsistence. Peter, her idiot boy, was very troublesome and dangerous, doing much mischief unless great care was taken. The few neighbors in Mortlake could do little to relieve her; there were no town officers to help her, and in her distress and destitution the widow applied to the selectmen of Pomfret, begging that they would take care of her son. A town-meeting was at once called, June 22, 1725, when the inhabitants declared it their opinion, "That we are not obliged by law nor conscience to take y<sup>e</sup> charge upon ourselves, and therefore desire the selectmen to make due return unto her, and if, after this, she do offer to impose the same upon the town we desire the selectmen to follow her in the law as a trespasser, at the town's charge." Thus debarred from Pomfret, the unfortunate Peter was next dispatched to Norwich, his birth-place, and there left at the house of Mr. Samuel Bishop. That town reported him as "altogether incapable of taking care of himself, and having no estate, nor near relative that hath ability or can be obliged to maintain

him," but, "as it was not our business," sent him back to Mortlake. Complaint was then laid before the Court of New London County, which committed poor Peter to the care of Jacob Ordway of Mortlake—servant or tenant of Belcher—and sent out writs to Norwich and Pomfret to appear at Court and show why they should not take care of him.

The case was considered, February 16, 1726, Captain John Sabin representing Pomfret. Both towns utterly refused to assume the charge. The Court deferred decision till June, entrusting Peter, meanwhile, to the care of Justices Pierce, Backus and Adams, desiring that he be prevented from doing mischief and not be left in a suffering condition, and if they could not find any one willing to take such care of him to make use of their authority. Daniel Davison of Mansfield, a distant relative, was found willing to receive mother and son into his family. In June the case was again considered. Both towns had made ample preparations for defence. Pomfret had appointed Captain Sabin and Lieutenant Leicester Grosvenor to represent her, appropriating rates previously granted for schools and meeting-house repairs to defraying their charges. It was shown that the deceased Peter Davison had removed from Norwich to Mansfield when his son was an infant, and there gained a residence, and that he was never in any sense an inhabitant of Pomfret. The Court was of opinion that neither Norwich nor Pomfret was bound to support the said idiot, but Mansfield—and as that town, with Pomfret, was now incorporated into a new county, they referred the final decision of this troublesome affair to the Court of Windham County. The sum allowed during this contest for poor Peter's support—nine shillings per week for sixteen weeks—was paid from the Treasury of New London County.

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### XXXI.

ASHFORD. LAND PURCHASE. SETTLEMENT. TOWN  
ORGANIZATION. MINISTER.

THE territory now included in the towns of Ashford and Eastford formed a part of the Wabbaquasset Country, conveyed to Major Fitch by Owaneco in 1684. It was a wild forest region, remote from civilization, but known and traversed from the early settlement of New England, lying directly in the route from Boston to Connecticut. The first company of Connecticut colonists encamped, it is said, on the hill north of the present Ashford village, and the old Connecticut Path

crossed what is now its common, but for three-quarters of a century no settlement was attempted in this vicinity. The first land laid out within the present townships was a tract four miles square, now the south part of Eastford, made over to Simeon Stoddard of Boston, in 1695, in satisfaction of a judgment of Court. Major Fitch was at the time greatly embarrassed in business affairs, and his title to the Wabbaquasset Country questioned; Mr. Stoddard was the resident of another Colony, and neither gentleman was disposed to undertake the settlement of this wild region. Under these circumstances, the General Court of Connecticut assumed the management of its affairs, and thus enacted:—

“*May 9, 1706.* This Court being informed that there is a good tract of land within this Colony, westward of the town of Woodstock, southward of the town of Mansfield and adjoining to the great pond called Crystal Pond, that may be sufficient to make a good and convenient town, which tract of land this Court, being willing to secure for such good people as shall be willing to settle thereon, do, therefore, grant a township there, of the extent and bigness of eight miles square, or equivalent thereunto. And, for that end, do hereby empower, order and appoint, Maj. John Chester, Capt. Matthew Allen, Capt. Cyprian Nichols, Capt. John Higley, Mr. John Hooker, Mr. Caleb Stanley and Eleazer Kimberly, they, or any three of them, to be a committee to survey and lay out the said township of the extent and quantity as aforesaid, and to make return thereof to this Court in October next, for further confirmation; and, also, to lay out home lots and other divisions of land, and to order and manage the affairs of the said town, and to admit and settle all such inhabitants thereon as are well approved, who shall, upon their admission, pay their proportionable parts of the charge of surveying and settling the same according to their respective allotments.”

This act, implying the right of conveyance as well as jurisdiction, aroused Major Fitch to immediate action, and, before the Court's committee had time to carry out their instructions, he had sold out his share of the granted township. In 1707, a tract, five miles in length and three in width, was purchased for £110, by John Cushing, Sam. Clap and David Jacob of Scituate, and laid out west of the Stoddard Tract, in the south part of what is now Ashford, under the name of the New Scituate Plantation. Captain John Chandler soon purchased a large part of this tract and a strip of land adjacent, and became the chief proprietor of New Scituate. The whole remaining territory of ancient Ashford, comprising 21,400 acres of land, was sold by Major Fitch to James Corbin of Woodstock, in 1708, who conveyed the same to David Jacob, Job Randall, and twelve others, residents of Scituate, Hingham and Andover,—Mr. Corbin retaining an equal share in the land and managing the affairs of the company.

These tracts were surveyed and laid out as rapidly as possible and efforts made to initiate a settlement in advance of the Government. No attempt was made to secure confirmation of this land from the General Court, and the proprietors evidently considered their title very doubtful. In January, 1710, Captain Chandler, in behalf of himself



and other proprietors of New Scituate, engaged to give John Mixer of Canterbury, for four pounds, a good deed of one hundred acres of land; "but in case it should happen that the right or claim of said company to said land should appear to be of no force or value," the money to be returned to him. Mr. Mixer selected his land "at a place called Mount Hope, lying on the river," on the site of the present village of Warrenville, and there began the settlement of Ashford. The Connecticut road passed by or near his residence. In the following April, James Corbin sold three hundred and fifty acres of land, "north of Stoddard land, on both sides Still River," to John Perry of Marlborough, who soon settled upon it, near the site of the present Eastford village.

The General Court, finding that settlement had already commenced while nothing had been done by the appointed committee in laying out the township, in May, 1710, ordered, appointed and fully empowered Allen, Stanley and Higley, together with Captain Richard Bushnell and Mr. Thomas Williams, to perform this service, and, in October, further enacted:—

"That, for the better enabling the said committee the more easily to do and perform that work, this Assembly doth give and grant unto them, or any three of them as aforesaid, full power as they shall see good, to order and appoint any one of themselves, or any surveyors of lands, to survey and lay out home-lots, or other divisions of land in the said town, for such persons as shall by them be admitted inhabitants there; and also to order and appoint any one of themselves to be a clerk or register for the said town, for the term of four years next ensuing, who shall provide a book for records, and therein enter and record all such divisions and surveys of land which they shall make, or cause to be made, within the said town as aforesaid; also, to administer to such clerk by them to be appointed, the town-clerk oath provided by law. And this Assembly do order and enact, that the said town shall be called and known by the name of Ashford, and that the cost and charge of the said work shall be borne and paid by such persons as the said committee shall receive and admit to be inhabitants within the said town."

The committee thus empowered took possession of the township and endeavored to lay it out in the name of the Colony, but met with many obstructions. The region was rough, rocky and unattractive, a great portion of it still covered with dense forest, the large number of ash trees suggesting the name of the township. These forests abounded in wolves, bears and various species of game, and were a favorite hunting-ground of the remaining Wabbequassets, furnishing large quantities of furs for James Corbin's fur trade, and perhaps led to his land purchase. Two families, five miles apart, were the only white inhabitants. For the possession of this land, a fierce contest was now pending between the Government of Connecticut and the various purchasers and greatly impeding settlement. Settlers were loth to buy of the Colony in the face of the claimants; and equally reluctant to buy of the claimants without confirmation from Government. In

May, 1711, both parties appealed to the Assembly; Chandler and Corbin for confirmation of their purchases and liberty to settle; the committee, to represent their inability to carry out their instructions under existing obstructions. The Assembly, thereupon, desired his Honor, the Governor, with advice of the appointed committee, "to take the town of Ashford into his care, appoint and instruct suitable persons to treat with the claimers, to adjust and compound with such as have any differences or claims, so far as consistent with the honor and interest of the Government and the right of particular persons, that so the settlement may proceed and be advanced and promoted."

Without waiting this legal adjustment, the claimants hurried on settlement—Philip Eastman of Woodstock, John Pitts, Benjamin Allen, Benjamin Russel and William Ward of Marlborough, buying farms of James Corbin, and settling north of the Stoddard Tract, on Still River, in the summer of 1711. Houses were built, land broken up and a highway laid out by these settlers. In May, 1712, James Corbin renewed his efforts for confirmation, in the name of about twenty proprietors of three-fourths of Ashford, showing:—

"That, whereas, by advice of several principal men of ye Colony, they did purchase of Major Fitch the native right, with design to make a speedy settlement—the Gen. Court having before granted it to be a town,—and having paid considerable sums for the same, and some persons entered upon it, and, whereas, the Colony has ordered a committee to lay out and settle the same lands, which, if they be settled by others and not the proprietors, will be the ruin of said proprietors; therefore, the said proprietors do pray the Court for the jurisdiction right to be added unto their native right, on condition of settling a certain number of inhabitants of such good manners and quality as shall be approved; also, said proprietors shall, at their own charge, lay out the town plot and other divisions in due form, which will be more advantageous to the Colony than to lie waste, or be settled by such as will offer, and thus the gospel may be there propagated and maintained for the use of those already come and to come hereafter."

In response to this petition, and in behalf of the committee, obstructed in their proceedings by the claims of sundry persons, the Court ordered, "That any person claiming right to land in Ashford should appear at the Gen. Court in the following October, and there set forth their pretended claims." Whether this injunction was heeded is not apparent, but certainly no right of jurisdiction was obtained. The right of Major Fitch to this land was now openly denied, and whether the claimants would succeed even in holding it was extremely doubtful. Presuming on possession, however, they continued to make sales and expedite settlement. William Price, Sen. and Jun., David Bishop, Nathaniel Walker, John Chubb and John Ross bought land of Corbin, and joined the eastern settlement. Daniel, James and Nath. Fuller of Windham, Josiah Bugbee of Woodstock, Samuel Rice and Philip Squier of Concord, purchased farms in New Scituate of Captain Chandler. The Court's committee also laid out some land in

spite of obstructions, and sold homesteads to Isaac Kendall, William Chapman, Isaac Farrar and Simon Burton, who were styled "interlopers" by the claimants. So many inhabitants had settled within the township, that in October, 1714, with the advice and concurrence of the claimants, they petitioned for further town privileges and liberty to organize government. The General Court after considering their prayer, granted:—

"1. That the inhabitants of the said town, that now are settled there or hereafter may be, shall have liberty to meet and choose a clerk and selectmen, with other officers for carrying on the prudential affairs of the place, and for settling and maintaining, a minister, and building a meeting-house as in other towns.

2. That the inhabitants of the said town shall forthwith, at their own charge, procure the surveyor of the county of Hartford to lay out the bounds of the said town to the quantity of eight miles square, according to the grant of this Court.

3. That all persons that have any right to any land in Ashford at this present time, shall pay towards the building of a meeting-house, minister's house, and settling of a minister there, the sum of twenty shillings for every hundred acres of land they claim within the said town, and so proportionably for greater or lesser quantities, to be levied by a rate made by the selectmen of the said town within one year and a half from the date of this act, collected by the constable of the said town and paid to the committee hereafter in this act appointed, or such person or persons as they shall appoint to receive the same; which committee shall determine the place of the said meeting-house in the most convenient place of the said town, and take care that the money so raised shall be improved to the use hereby appointed, with all the speed that may be; and in default of payment of the said rate by any person or persons, execution shall go upon the lands of such person or persons within the said town, if no other estate belonging to them be found within the precincts of the said town, sufficient for the payment thereof.

4. That each claimer of land in the said town of Ashford, as aforesaid, do, within one year after the date of this act, make an entry of the deeds, instruments or records of any sort, by which they claim the same, in a book to be provided by the said town for that purpose, and kept by the clerk of the said town, in order the better to show each person's just proportion of the tax upon lands by virtue of this act raised, and for the better enabling the said committee to execute the trust reposed in them by this act.

5. That all the lands within the said town not claimed and entered as aforesaid, (except such as are claimed by a grant or quit-claim from the Government) be and remain at the disposition of the Government, to be given in suitable portions by the said committee, to such persons as within two years and an half from the date hereof shall go and settle themselves by building thereon.

6. That what shall be further necessary for the above mentioned pious uses shall be levied upon the heads and ratable estate of all inhabitants that are or shall be within the said town, within the time aforesaid of two years and an half, to be levied and collected as in other towns, and paid to the committee as aforesaid, or such person or persons as they shall appoint to receive the same, to be improved by them to the said uses, with all convenient speed.

7. That William Pitkin and Joseph Talcott, Esqrs. and Captain Aaron Cook and Mr. Edward Bulkly, or any three of them, be a committee of this Government, to take care of the affairs committed to them by this act; who shall be paid for the service they do therein either out of the said tax, or as the committee and the said town and the inhabitants thereof shall agree otherwise.

8. That the brand for the horses of the said town shall be the figure 3."

At the same date a quit-claim to 10,240 acres of land in Ashford, bounded four miles east by Pomfret and otherwise by waste land, was



granted by the Assembly to Simeon Stoddard and heirs, of Boston. The other non-resident claimants—Chandler, Corbin, Cushing and Company—complied as soon as possible with the requisitions of the General Court, inscribing in the book of records speedily procured by the town their various deeds of purchase from Major Fitch, and signifying their willingness to pay the prescribed tax for settling public worship, hoping thereby to be confirmed in peaceable possession of their claims.

Town organization was effected as soon as possible under the circumstances. The inhabitants were few and feeble, dependent solely on their own exertions and resources, and communication between the two settlements very difficult. The first town-meeting was held early in 1715. William Ward acted as moderator, John Mixer was chosen town clerk and treasurer; John Perry, constable; William Ward and John Perry were elected selectmen; William Ward also served as first grand-jury-man; John Chapman as second. William Ward, Philip Eastman, Nathaniel Fuller, John Pitt, Benjamin Russel, James Corbin and Isaac Kendall were chosen to state and lay out highways. A book for recording town acts was given to the town by James Corbin. Nothing was done this year but to lay out land and highways. February, 1716, it was voted, "That the meeting-house be built first—that is, before the minister's house." That it should be forty feet long; thirty-five broad, and eighteen, high. That Nathaniel Abbot (a young settler, who with his brother William had just arrived from Andover), should be master carpenter to cut and hew timber for three shillings a day and diet; men assisting to have two shillings a day and oxen, one—William Ward to oversee the work.

March 13, the town voted, "To go on with the meeting-house, hew timber and get it ready to raise. That men who worked on the frame should have two and nine-pence a day; William Abbot three shillings and his diet, and that four and six-pence a week should be given to William Ward, to diet said Abbot while at work on the frame. Also, that William Ward, Sen. should go and try to get a minister to preach in Ashford a quarter of a year." Mr. Ward very soon went out on this mission and was so fortunate as to secure a minister who remained a quarter of a *century*. Mr. James Hale of Swanzea, a graduate of Harvard in 1703, is believed to have returned with Mr. Ward, and at once established regular religious services and assumed the pastoral charge of the people. April 7, the town voted, "That it was willing to build a house for the minister." John Mixer was directed to keep the minister, and Nathaniel and Daniel Fuller to agree how much to give him for it. July 9, it was agreed, "That James Hale be offered thirty-five pounds for one year and if that don't content him, offer



forty pounds ; one-third money, two-thirds provision pay." William Ward, John Perry and John Mixer, committee. In November, a formal call to settlement was given, the town offering Mr. Hale, "forty pounds a year for three years ; forty-five pounds the fourth year ; fifty the fifth ; then to add two pounds a year till it reached sixty pounds ; one-fourth in money ; the remainder in other supplies at money price—the ten years to begin at the time that Mr. Hale brought his family to live. Also to give him his fire wood and a hundred acres of land, upon choice of land that is not taken up, in case he settle here—Benjamin Russel and John Mixer to be the men to oversee getting the fire wood. Also, to build him a house two stories high with a twenty-foot room in it."

## XXXII.

### LAND CONTROVERSIES. ATTEMPTED SETTLEMENT. CHURCH FORMED.

THE building minister's and meeting-house and other public improvements were delayed by a renewal of the land controversy. The town authorities found it difficult to effect needful improvements, while so much of its territory was in the hands of non-residents. No highways could be laid out, no land obtained for public uses without the consent or payment of these owners, and finding that their title was considered very doubtful by the Government of Connecticut, the town determined to procure its abrogation and secure itself the ownership of the land as well as its jurisdiction. The first step taken, March 13, 1716, was in appointing Daniel Fuller and Philip Eastman to assist the selectmen in taking care that no person be allowed to come and survey land and settle upon it without leave from said committee. In May, John Mixer was chosen "to be the man to go to the Gen. Court in behalf of said town, as to settlement of a town," who May 10, 1716, represented to that body:—

"That whereas Ashford has long labored under great difficulties still growing and increasing by reason that the lands or the greatest part of them are still unsettled, which with the numerous claims of sundry persons to the property of said lands is very discouraging and disheartening to the inhabitants, and is likely to prove of very fatal consequence to the welfare of said town and its increase and population ; and your petitioners can't find that the said pretended claimers had any real right, and pray that the Assembly would so order the settlement of this poor plantation that the inhabitants may be encouraged and the Assembly give the Colony right of land not yet granted by them, to such persons as are thought meet."

To this petition the subjoined response was at once given by Chandler and Corbin.

"That they were sorry for Ashford's difficulty in being unsettled and claimed by men of Ashford in part and are much afflicted, also, that any body

claims or desires any land besides themselves, nor can they find that any body besides themselves have any real right in said town, and upon the premises—join themselves with Ashford and refer themselves to ye great wisdom of ye Court. And though we cannot join with Ashford in desiring the act of 1706, to be revived, which on good consideration has been since superceded by a general settlement with great care and cost made by a consent of this Court, and at great cost of the claimers complied with, yet in the rest of the petition, understood as every honest man will understand it, we heartily comply with it, which is, that the land claimed may be confirmed to such individuals as have bought it for valuable consideration and complied with the late settlement of the Court.”

About twenty persons, they averred, were already settled by the claimers, and five more would have actually been there had not Kendall and William Chapman been their hindrances. James Corbin carried on a lot for his son, and had built and made considerable improvements.

The General Court was by no means satisfied with the position of affairs, and would gladly have ousted the several claimants from their possessions in Ashford, but as they had promptly complied with the terms of settlement, could not consistently enact their immediate ejection. An act, “giving the land to the inhabitants,” was, however, passed in the Lower House, but lost in the Upper. John Mixer, “defeated of audience,” appealed again to the Assembly, May 26, and begged it “to consider their lamentable condition and great discouragement to any to come, and moveth well-disposed men to remove, and pray your opinion whether the payment of a tax of twenty shillings shall make a title to all that attend it of what quantity soever they claim and enter, and pray that your Honors would order a committee of judicious, indifferent men to come to our town.” This request was also denied, and Mr. Mixer returned to Ashford defeated in all the objects of his mission.

This defeat did not prevent further agitation. A majority of the inhabitants were more firmly resolved to attain possession of at least a part of their territory. A large minority, who had purchased land of Chandler or Corbin, earnestly opposed them. At the town-meeting in October, John Mixer was again chosen “to go to the General Assembly for a Pattern for the town of Ashford.” From this vote dissented John Pitts, William Price, 2d, James Corbin, Joseph Bass, Benjamin Allen, Thomas Corbin, Nehemiah Watkins, David Bishop, William Watkins, Joseph Chubb, Benjamin Russel, Samuel Rice, Nath. Fuller, Nath. Abbot, Joseph Wilson and Philip Eastman. At the town-meeting, December 31, great confusion prevailed. Uncertainty existed as to who were lawful voters. Non-resident land-holders claimed the right of voting, and so sharp was the dispute that a part of the inhabitants withdrew, with one of the selectmen, and acted by themselves. The standing party, with two selectmen, carried on the regular meeting. Willam Ward, Sen., was chosen moderator, John

Mixer, town-clerk and first selectman ; William Ward, second selectman ; Daniel Fuller, third ; Isaac Magoon, surveyor. "And here," says the record, "is the work which the other party and the one selectman did: Nathaniel Fuller was chosen first selectman ; John Perry, the second ; Philip Eastman, the third ; Benjamin Russel, constable ; Nathaniel Abbot, surveyor for the east of Ashford ; Isaac Kendall, for the west ; Philip Eastman, grand juror for the east ; John Mixer, for the west ; John Perry, brander for the east ; Daniel Fuller, for the west." At this point in the proceedings, an agreement was effected, and all the selectmen chosen by each party were allowed to stand, and a proposal made to choose one more to make up the favored number, *seven*, but this amendment was not formally carried, although the conscientious chronicler asserts, "that John Pitts was chosen selectman by a great deal bigger vote in the affirmative than the negative was," but failing to catch the precise form of expression he did not venture to record it, "as some said y<sup>e</sup> word of y<sup>e</sup> vote was, Y<sup>t</sup> Pitts should be seventh selectman ; some, That John Pitts should be added to the other six ; and some, That John Pitts should be added to the rest." Two hundred acres of land were then granted by the town to John Mixer for his going to the General Court for the town, "he to go this time and acquit the town of all charge." Thomas Corbin, Thomas Tiffany, Obadiah Abbe and other non-residents, dissented from this vote and all the proceedings of this meeting.

It does not appear that the town asked or received a patent, or any further order or permission from the General Assembly, but, nevertheless, its officers proceeded to assume jurisdiction of the whole territory, without any regard to the authority and ownership of the claimants. The land was first surveyed by Colonel William Allen, and paid for by the inhabitants. A half-mile strip, at the northern extremity of the town, accruing to it by the adjustment of the Massachusetts Boundary Line, was ordered, "To be laid out in farms to the inhabitants y<sup>t</sup> paid for the laying out y<sup>e</sup> township of Ashford—William Ward and Nath. Fuller to lay it out." Seventy-five acres of land were added to Mr. Hale's lot and the privilege of taking twenty-five more, where it suits him. Grants were allowed several other persons, "to be laid out where it suits them, except on Pine or Meeting-house Hill or on other persons' property." August 23, 1717, William Ward was directed to inquire into the titles of land and also to lay the circumstances before the committee, and a committee was also appointed to draw up a memorial to lay before the General Court. As several of the inhabitants opposed these proceedings of the town, lest it should invalidate their titles secured from Corbin or Chandler and compel them to pay twice for their homesteads, it was granted to them, "That all lands bought of

the claimants, that they had had laid out, should be free to them, beside the equal share in all the undivided land." January 11, 1718, it was further voted, "That the town doth grant all those lands that have been already granted to be free and clear according to the most free tenure of East Greenwich, in county of King, in the Realm of England—provided these persons give sufficient bonds, with sureties, to John Perry and Philip Eastman, who are appointed to furnish the committee with money to build the meeting-house." The lands not previously laid out they proceeded to divide among the inhabitants:—

"March 5, 1718, voted, To lay out two hundred acres of land to a proprietor, beginning at the west end of the town and to extend east till each have two hundred acres—excluding the north half-mile, which belongs to a particular number of themselves—not intruding on any farm laid out by the town's order. It must be considered that each farm is to be laid out in regular form, and not to extend east further than the centre line north and south. At the said meeting, the proprietors agree to draw for a choice, and after they have laid out one hundred acres to each, then the last one to begin, and so on."

The following forty-five persons gave bonds, drew lots and were admitted proprietors of Ashford:—

John Follet.	Nathaniel Walker.	John Chapman.
Caleb Jackson.	John Mixer.	John Follet, 2d.
James Fuller.	Isaac Magoon.	Philip Eastman.
Joshua Kendall.	Nehemiah Watkins.	Jacob Ward.
Nathaniel Abbot.	Philip Squier.	Daniel Fuller.
Joshua Beckman.	E. Orcutt.	Widow Dimick.
Isaac Farrar.	Nathaniel Fuller.	Jeremiah Allen.
Nath. Gary.	Jacob Parker.	William Farnum.
Thomas Corbin.	William Price.	William Watkins.
Peter Aldrich.	Obadiah Abbe.	Thomas Tiffany, 2d.
William Ward, Sen.	Josiah Bugbee.	James Tiffany.
Thomas Tiffany.	Benjamin Miller.	Joseph Cook.
William Ward, Jun.	William Fisk.	Matthew Fuller.
Joseph Ross.	John Pitts.	Isaac Kendall.
John Perry.	William Price, 2d.	Antony Goffe.

A small number of these proprietors were residents of Windham and Pomfret, the remainder were then residents of Ashford. In this assumption and division of territory, the town, though acting solely in its own name and authority, undoubtedly received the sanction of the committee appointed to advise and assist them.

While the land settlement was in progress, other public improvements were initiated. With land at command, minister's and meeting-house were attainable. December 31, 1716, it was voted, "That the town will forthwith go to work to build Mr. Hale's house, cut the timber and draw and hew it." Its "great room," when completed, probably was used for the place of public worship till the meeting-house was ready. Forty shillings in money was next allowed for building a pound, and five shillings more for lock, staples and fastenings. November 15, 1717, voted, "That the town will raise money, *some way or other*, to build the meeting-house." The way



devised was by a tax on each admitted proprietor—the town refusing to appropriate the money paid over for that purpose by the claimants.” January 1, 1718, voted, “That the meeting-house be set upon the Pine Hill, and that the town will go about building it forthwith.” This site was in the northern part of New Scituate, near the centre of the town, and is still occupied by the Congregational church of Ashford. April 21, the town agreed, “To raise the meeting-house with their own strength, and for every man to provide for himself at the raising—five shillings fine to be laid upon each man that neglects to assist in raising the same, upon three days’ warning given by Carpenter Abbot.” The committee with the two carpenters, were directed, “to pitch the most convenient place to set the meeting house adjoining or near the place the committee appointed.” The house was promptly raised and covered, and made ready for occupation in the autumn. Mr. Hale was allowed the first choice of the room left for pews for a pew for Mrs. Hale and his family. In October, it was voted, “To ordain Mr. Hale as pastor over the church and the minister of this town some time this fall.” Upon application made to the Assembly by John Mixer, in behalf of the town of Ashford, leave was granted, to gather a church and ordain an orthodox minister amongst them, and on November 26, 1718, says the record, “set down by one James Hale” :—

“We were formed a church in this town of Ashford, a number of us, and I was ordained to the pastoral office by the imposition of ye hands of the Rev. Josiah Dwight, Mr. Samuel Whiting and Joseph Meachem of Coventry. The covenant was signed before the reverend elders and worthy messengers at the house of Mr. Hale, before the ordination services, by the brethren coalescing in church state, *i. e.* James Hale, John Mixer, William Ward, Joseph Green, Isaac Magoon, Matthew Thompson, William Chapman, Benjamin Russel, Daniel Fuller, Isaac Kendall, John Pitts, Nathaniel Fuller and John Perry. Nath. Fuller ye same day was baptized by Mr. Whiting.”

A church meeting was held, December 9, at which “several sisters were received in the Lord—as becometh saints,”—by letters from other churches, *i. e.* Sarah Hale, Abigail Mixer, Judith Ward, Mary Fuller, Mary Russel, Elizabeth Squier, Mary Fuller, Mrs. William Chapman and the Widow Dimick.” December 21, Elinor Kendall and Sarah Bugbee were also received. John Mixer and Isaac Kendall were chosen at first “to serve y<sup>e</sup> Lord’s table in order to be proved for the deacon’s office,” but the church apparently concluded that one deacon would be sufficient; Isaac Kendall “resigned up his interest in y<sup>e</sup> vote, and the vote was confirmed for our loving brother Mixer as serving on probation for the office of deacon.”

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That the several claimants of Ashford land should resign their purchases without a struggle was not to be expected, and before the church was organized, Messrs. Chandler and Cushing, in behalf of themselves

and others, had appealed to the General Assembly, May 8, 1718, showing :—

“1. That they have bought land in 1707, of Major Fitch, and had settled several families there, a very worthy minister of the gospel was settled there and a meeting-house building, that they had recorded deeds of purchase in 1714, paid £96 for taxes for pious uses, and now prayed for confirmation and patent.

2. That in Sept., 1707, they came to address the Court for one, but were discouraged by particular gentlemen, and thenceforward expected their only remedy in Major Fitch, and afterwards, in 1712 or '13, were cited before the Court, and concluded to record their deeds. Things so standing, a number of persons that we had brought onto the place and three or four that had intruded, denied our claims and disturbed the peaceable settlement, and, therefore, we ask confirmation; think there is no need of citing the inhabitants, which would but raise a popular clamor against us, and pray for a committee of wise, faithful and judicious persons.”

No immediate answer was granted to this petition. In the following May, the inhabitants of Ashford, conscious that their “free manner of settling” lacked the direct authority of the Government, thus told their story :—

“*May 14, 1719.* It becomes us to be thankful to Almighty God for his goodness in granting us the gospel, and to acknowledge the favor of this Gen. Court in setting us at first in a way so that we might have a minister, and more lately of giving us liberty to gather a church among us; upon which we have a church gathered and minister ordained, and return hearty thanks to the Hon. Court for this favor. We have the enjoyment of the gospel to our great satisfaction, particularly through the religious Constitution of the Colony, even as to the manner and measure of enjoying; notwithstanding, we are like the Children of Israel in the wilderness as to earthly possessions, and we hope it may be reckoned not alien from a Christian spirit that we desire to be settled, as Israel was at last, in good outward circumstances, and howsoever we may plead for the free manner of settling our town from the unexceptionable just way, used in the first time of New England—yet we need go no higher than our first grant, if we may be settled according to the true and just and righteous intent thereof, which we earnestly desire. We think we do well to choose such a free state of settling as the providence of God allows us at one time and another, rather than to shut the door of our own liberties against the same, and therefore we hope it may be well taken by the Court that our meeting-house has been built by money received from lands, without making use of the claimers' money, and, whereas, we have had our town more perfectly surveyed by Col. Matthew Allen, we desire the whole of the contents he hath surveyed to us may be confirmed and a patent also for all said lands—(except Mr. Stoddard's)—given to us; had rather give a reasonable sum of money to the Treasury—*e. g.*, 100 pounds, and fifty more within one year and a half—than to part with our lands.”

The General Court having heard and considered the memorials of both parties, decided that the time had come for a final settlement of the affairs of the town, and appointed a committee to repair to Ashford, view the land and determine the matter in dispute, with liberty of appeal to the following session of the Court if in anything it should appear that the committee dealt too hardly either with the claimants or inhabitants.

## XXXIII.

LAND SETTLEMENTS. VARIOUS IMPROVEMENTS. UNHAPPY  
ACCIDENT.

THE committee appointed by the General Court—James Wadsworth, Esq., Mr. John Hooker, Captain John Hall and Mr. Hezekiah Brainerd—met in Ashford, September 9, 1719. It was a meeting of great interest and importance to both claimants and inhabitants, involving the title to large landed estates and the homesteads of nearly forty families. Many prominent gentlemen were present—Captain Chandler, Captain Cushing and James Corbin, in behalf of themselves and their partners; Captain John Fitch of Windham, and Captain Thomas Huntington of Mansfield, in behalf of their respective townships. John Mixer, William Ward, John Perry, Philip Eastman and Nathaniel Fuller appeared as agents for the town of Ashford. The little settlement was all aglow with interest and excitement.

The first two days of the session were given to examining the claims of Captains Fitch and Huntington, who insisted that Ashford had encroached upon the territory conveyed by Joshua's Will to Windham and Mansfield. Friday, 14, the committee dismissed the whole matter in question, on the ground:—

“1. That the claim was directly against other claimants, and doubted, therefore, if it was properly in order.

2. That when Windham—then including Mansfield—took out their patent, they did not claim that now claimed, but rather chose land on the other side.

3. That she had complied with the Court's act, injoining all persons having rights of land to pay twenty shillings per hundred acres for the support of the ministry.”

The committee next proceeded to hear the several pleas of the Ashford settlers, who had bought or taken up land in either New Scituate or Corbin's tract, but were interrupted in their investigations by propositions to compromise. Messrs. Chandler, Cushing and Clapp, as agents for the New Scituate claimants, tendered unto the inhabitants the following terms, viz.:—

“That all the persons entered in the list of proprietors should hold their land in such quantity and allotments as already laid out, providing:—

1. That all and every of said persons should within one year from date pay unto said claimants or their order in the town of Woodstock, three pounds per hundred, for each and every hundred acres taken up or sold as aforesaid in said Scituate upon the forfeiture and losing all right to any such land, only it is to be understood that what sales had been before made by said claimers should be sufficient for such persons so purchasing of the claimants to pay such sums agreed upon to be the consideration of such purchase and no more for such lands, and shall not be obliged to pay said three pounds per hundred

acres or any part thereof, and all such bargains being made duly evident by said claimants, all persons having not yet paid the consideration agreed upon, shall within one year pay the same as aforementioned in Woodstock—and in default thereof, the claimers shall enter upon and hold said lands.

2. That the Reverend James Hale shall have and hold to himself and his heirs that two hundred acres already laid out to him upon which he has built, being in New Scituate.

3. That there be a parcel of land to contain sixty acres laid out as near the meeting-house in said Scituate as may be and sequestered for the support of the gospel ministry in said Ashford, forever.

4. That there shall be ten acres of land where the meeting-house now stands for the conveniency of a green or common, all which land for minister, ministry and common, is not to be accounted any part of the land to be paid for by the settlers.

5. That all necessary highways shall be laid out. These terms were offered upon condition, That the claimants should have, hold and enjoy all the land in New Scituate not above tendered and disposed of to particular persons, and, That the tax paid by them for setting up and supporting the ministry should be returned to them as soon as convenient."

Messrs. Mixer, Ward, Perry, and other members of the committee agreed to these terms on behalf of Ashford, and prayed the Court's committee to ratify the agreement. The committee gladly acquiesced in this amicable arrangement and agreed:—

"That all that had taken land in New Scituate should hold it on the proposed terms, and ratified and confirmed unto the claimants of that disputed plantation every part and parcel of land not above ratified and confirmed, and agreed that the tax money should be returned, if desired, by the General Assembly."

Of the ninety-six hundred acres comprised in this tract, 5,726 had already been appropriated by the inhabitants, and after deducting the reserves for minister, ministry and common, 3,374 acres remained to the claimants, out of which all necessary highways were to be allowed without the charge of purchase by the town, and laid out within a year. As the present inhabitants, in the opinion of the committee, amounted to the full quota that ought to be settled in New Scituate, the claimants were discharged from further settlement except at discretion.

"Monday, September 14, the committee proceeded to hear the claims of James Corbin and partners, with the reply of Ashford committee—and found that Corbin and partners had already sold a considerable part of their claim, a part of which was settled and other parts likely to be, to the advantage of the town, and therefore confirmed the land unto persons holding under Corbin, i. e., to Philip Eastman, William Price, William Ward, Caleb Jackson, Nathaniel Walker, John Perry, William Chapman, Benjamin Allen, Benjamin Russel, Joseph Chubb, James Ross, John Pitts, Thomas Jennings, James and Nathaniel Fuller, Philip Squier and Nathaniel Abbot; also to James Corbin four hundred acres at Bungee Brook; three hundred to Benjamin Russel at Eel-pot Brook together with farms to Isaac Farrar, Simon Burton and Samuel Rice,—amounting in all to 10,770 acres." Six thousand acres were still unappropriated, of which twenty-five hundred were confirmed



to Corbin and partners—to be taken up within a year in twenty, or fewer, pieces—and the remainder of the land to be sequestered for highways and a perpetual commonage for the free and common use of the inhabitants. Ministry tax to be returned to claimants; further settlement of land left at their own discretion.

With regard to three hundred and twenty acres of land at the north of New Scituate in dispute between Chandler and Corbin, already taken up by the town as the site of their meeting-house and minister's house, as there was great necessity that it should be continued to the settlers and the lines were not marked out and yet uncertain—the committee confirmed the same to the town on condition of paying for it, five pounds per hundred acres, in default of such payment being forfeited to claimants. Inhabitants to run the lines within two months, Captain John Chandler assisting with his instruments—settlers obliged to show their bounds to claimants.

The report of the committee was presented to the General Court, October 20, 1719, accepted and confirmed. Philip Eastman was the man appointed by the town "to see after settlement of line," and obtain confirmation of the agreement, and the selectmen empowered "to procure a copy of what the committee did." February, 1720, William Ward and Isaac Farrar were chosen to assist Captain Chandler in running the lines of New Scituate, and the three hundred and twenty acres. William Ward, John Mixer and John Perry were allowed by town-act, "three shillings a day for tending on the Court's committee," but afterwards agreed to take five shillings each, for their services on that occasion. Nathaniel Fuller and Philip Eastman were each allowed two pounds, two shillings, "for tending seven days on the above committee." May 20, the town voted, That the man that goes to Court shall see what the General Assembly will do concerning making and establishing the west line of the town. William Ward was then chosen to go to Court, and John Mixer "to draw up the minds of the town to send with Mr. Ward." By persistent efforts the various lines were established and Ashford claims and contests harmoniously and equitably settled. Chandler and Corbin received payment for previous sales and confirmation of a goodly number of acres remaining; the settlers retained their lands on moderate terms, and the town received a sufficiency for all public uses.

The Stoddard Tract was undisturbed by all these controversies. The Assembly had early confirmed this land to Mr. Stoddard and the town allowed his claim and quietly received his taxes. In 1716, Mr. Anthony Stoddard conveyed this Ashford land to his sons, Anthony, David and William, on condition that they gave him sixty pounds in money, the first day of June, every year at his home in Boston. The

first settler of this tract was John Chapman, who took what was delicately called, "irregular possession" in 1714, but was numbered among the regular inhabitants of the town. William Chapman, Benj. Wilson and John Perry bought Stoddard land in 1718. Captain John Chandler bought the strip lying west of the Nachaug, and sold it out to settlers. The remainder of this land was long left vacant and unimproved, its owners paying their rates duly and manifesting an interest in the affairs of the town. A book for records was given to the town by Mr. Stoddard in 1719, and brought up from Boston by Philip Squier, who was allowed four shillings for the cost and trouble.

The land question being settled, other public matters claimed attention. Ashford at this date contained about forty families, about equally divided between its eastern and western sections. A good minister had been settled and a house built for him; a church organized and meeting-house framed and covered, but little else had been accomplished. A large part of the territory was still a savage wilderness. Wolves abounded in the remote sections, and rewards were frequently paid for their destruction. Schools were yet lacking, pounds infrequent, roads defective, streams unbridged. The old Connecticut Path, winding around through Woodstock with a branch crossing Pomfret, was the only thoroughfare of travel. No ways were as yet apparently laid out by the settlers. The state of society in Ashford was rude and even barbarous. The claimants had been anxious to settle their lands as rapidly as possible and accommodated all purchasers without regard to character, and though there were many good citizens among them, there was also a lawless and turbulent element. Its mode of settlement had also given rise to sectional jealousies. East and west, Corbin and Chandler settlers had conflicting interests. So distinct were the settlements that east and west town officers were found needful. John Mixer, Nathaniel Fuller and William Ward were the leading men in the west section; John Perry and Philip Eastman in the east. The first tavern-keeper chosen by town vote was John Mixer.

The ministry of Mr. Hale was very acceptable to all parties and many soon united with the church or owned the covenant. In 1719, the church voted, "That we will receive baptized persons under the watch and care of the church that can not come up to give a reason of the hope that they are converted." The discipline of the church was very strictly maintained and many brothers and sisters were cited for unneighborly acts and trifling misdemeanors, and forced to make public acknowledgments or be suspended from full or "half-way privileges." In November, 1720, the church voted, "To try to choose a deacon that might be together with Deacon Mixer," but the major

part not agreeing upon one, they decided "to rest contented from proceeding any farther from choosing one to assist Deacon Mixer to serve y<sup>e</sup> table of y<sup>e</sup> Lord in manner of probation." At the same meeting they also voted, "That they would provide suitable vessels for the table of the, Lord as soon as may be convenient, by a free contribution of money or engagement for money, i. e., one flagon, one tankard, three beakers, two platters, a basin for baptism, and a church book, as fast as they could."

In 1721, the church and community were greatly disturbed by the proposed removal of Deacon Mixer—Ashford's first settler and most prominent public man. A second deacon was now indispensable. "At eleven, A. M., September 6, 1721, in the house of God," the people were requested "to choose one or two meet persons to serve as deacons—our beloved brother Mixer being so much engaged to remove from us." Isaac Kendall and Joseph Bugbee were then chosen upon probation, and after considering the matter some three months accepted the office, and were "desired to go into the deacon's seat next Sabbath and receive the treasures of the church and act agreeable to the office of deacon." At the same meeting, "our brother John Perry" was selected "to set the psalm with respect to public singing." In the following spring, Deacon Mixer and his two daughters were dismissed to the church in Suffield. The "probation" served by his successors was prolonged six years.

The completion of the meeting-house cost much labor, time and discussion. Various votes were passed ordering pews and pew-spots but none were satisfactory, and in May, 1721, the town voted, "That all acts and votes cast about pew room in Ashford from the beginning of the world to this day, shall be null and void." A rate of two-pence for finishing the house was levied and a body of seats erected. A committee of five men was then appointed to seat the meeting-house Thanksgiving day after exercise—rules given, 1, age; 2, present list; 3, first planters; 4, usefulness in town,—but with all their care the seating was not satisfactory. In 1723, the question was reconsidered, and "pew room granted to such persons as the town shall think suitable and their heirs and successors, for ever—provided they build by October 1, and plaster and whitewash all the lower part of the meeting-house to the lower girth." The favored few were William Ward and son, Captain John Perry, Nathaniel Fuller, Philip Eastman, Thomas Tiffany, Jacob Parker and son, Daniel Fuller and Benjamin Russel. October 1, the men that have pews were allowed eight weeks more to finish them, and a small pew room granted to Deacon Kendall. Two shillings were allowed to Nathaniel Fuller "for y<sup>e</sup> hour-glass that stands in y<sup>e</sup> meeting-house."

Mr. Hale's salary was paid with considerable promptness but his house was left for several years unfinished, and his fire-wood secured with great difficulty. In 1720, the town voted, "That every man sixteen years old shall work one day in getting Mr. Hale's firewood, and those that did not work one day last year, shall work two days this. Monday after next is appointed for every man to work—October 24—and those that neglect it this year and last shall pay six-pence; those that neglect this year and worked last shall pay three-pence."

In 1720, the people of Ashford were greatly excited and distressed by a lamentable occurrence, resulting in the death of one of their young men and the accusation and imprisonment of another. John Aplin, a young man living with Joshua Kendall, was passing the evening with Joseph Wilson and falling into dispute over a game at pennies, went out doors with him "to try it out." Grappling each other as they passed through the door, they scuffled a few moments and pitched over together on to the ground, Aplin uppermost. Wilson at once exclaimed, "I am a dead man," and so it proved. Some fatal inward injury had befallen him, paralyzing the lower part of his body. He was unable to stand, or move his limbs, and died in a few days. The jurors summoned on inquest, gave their verdict—

"That Wilson came to his death by some strain, or wrench, or blow, or fall, or broke something within his body. We all conclude that was the occasion of his death—John Aplin being with him when he received hurt, December 28, 1720."

Aplin was at once indicted on the charge of manslaughter and bound over for trial before the Superior Court at Hartford—John Perry, the Kendalls and others, giving bonds for his appearance.

This sad affair excited great interest and sympathy. Both young men were well known and respected. Wilson was lately married and left a young wife and family. Aplin was greatly beloved by the Kendalls and their neighbors. Though it was evident that no serious harm had been intended, yet as he was clearly accessory to Wilson's death under the stringent administration of law then prevailing, great fears were entertained of his conviction of the crime. His situation called out universal sympathy and compassion. Aplin himself was "grieved and broken at heart, that he should have been in such a manner instrumental in the death of his friend." The dying man had absolved him from intentional blame and signified his forgiveness, even after he was speechless. His wife had tried "to make it up between them and did reckon one as much to blame as the other." The imprisonment of this young man in the wretched, unwarmed jail through the inclement winter, and his possible conviction and punishment, greatly disturbed his fellow townsmen, and every effort was made to secure his acquittal or a mitigation of sentence. The Reverend



Mr. Hale wrote to the Governor, "That it was a pity the poor man should lie in jail all winter. There was something of anger on his part but no prejudice or malice." A very touching account of Wilson's last hours was given by William Ward, who "heard Aplin put it to Wilson about laying anything to his charge and forgiving him, and he held up his hand." Captain John Fitch of Windham, interested himself much in the young prisoner and forwarded the following letter to Governor Pitkin :—

"ASHFORD, *January 4, 1721.*

May it please your Worship—There being liberty granted by the worshipful Captain Fitch for any to write to your worship on y<sup>e</sup> behalf of our sorrowful friend John Aplin that which might plead or encourage the taking bail for him that he might not go to prison there to abide this winter and cold season, we the subscribers do humbly write to your Worship now on this said Aplin's behalf, testifying for him that whereas we have known him from childhood and the more from his dwelling some time with us in our families both formerly and also since he came to this place, so we have esteemed him always a man of good knowledge and sense in religion; of a peaceable and quiet conversation; ready to suffer but never as we remember to do an injury—and as to the unhappy accident of Joseph Wilson being mortally hurt as it was judged by a wrench or strain, we hope he will be found clear from any willful premeditated design to injure said Wilson. We can't find by any search or discourse from any one that he struck him any blow by hand, or head, or foot, or anywise. The compassions of people are generally towards him; sundry are ready to be bound for him, if your Worship shall please to consider these things as to be encouraged to take bail for him.

Joshua Kendall.  
Susanna Kendall.

John Thatcher.  
Elizabeth Thatcher."

Through these representations, Aplin was allowed to remain in Ashford till his trial at Hartford, March 21, 1721, when he was acquitted and discharged. The tenderness and sympathy manifested on this occasion pleasantly relieve the bickerings and asperities so common in that rude period.

## XXXIV.

SUFFRAGE DISPUTE. SCHOOLS. NEW INHABITANTS. FAMINE.  
CHANDLER'S AND CORBIN'S CLAIM.

**T**HE peace and harmony enjoyed by Ashford after the happy settlement of the troublesome land question was broken in 1721-22, by a violent dispute upon the exercise of suffrage. By the act of 1714, all the inhabitants of the town then settled "or that hereafter may be," had liberty to vote for town officers without respect to the usual legal qualification, a privilege granted because of the small numbers of settlers and the great need of town organization. In that chaotic period, when most of the inhabitants were "irregular" this unusual liberty made no trouble, and for a time after the more orderly settlement of affairs no improper advantage was taken of it, but those not regularly

admitted as inhabitants apparently abstained from voting. An attempt to establish schools was probably the exciting cause of the clamor. One Arthur Humphrey had removed from Woodstock to Ashford in 1720, according to his opponents, a seditious, ignorant person unable to read or write. A number of settlers in the east part of the town hired a schoolmaster to teach their children at their own charge, whereupon Humphrey "published a false story about them," and soon excited a popular clamor, rallying all the young and inexperienced around him by insisting upon their right to vote under the act of 1714, and became the leader of a movement "to quash all learning, and keep the town in ignorance and as unlearned as he is himself." So strong was this movement that, in December, 1721, "when all the world voted," Humphrey himself, though newly settled and every way unqualified, was elected one of the selectmen. Four of the selectmen previously elected then refused to serve, upon the ground that the proceedings were illegal, and that a number of the voters were destitute of the necessary legal qualifications. No other officers were appointed to fill the vacancy, and thus the town government was left in the hands of Humphrey and John Pitts. The greatest uproar and confusion followed, and, "good order and friendly society almost subverted." Humphrey broke up the school, and warned the school master out of town, prosecuted the refractory selectmen to their great cost and trouble, and when the inhabitants refused to hand in their lists levied a rate on lists so imperfect "that some men with more than six thousand pounds estates were left out," and kept the whole town in a ferment. In the spring, a petition was sent to the Assembly by the solid men of Ashford, showing "That the town officers chosen by unqualified persons the preceding autumn, were not acceptable or capable of managing affairs, and praying that they might be established by act of Court, or the town enabled to choose new ones among themselves qualified for carrying forward the prudential affairs of the town, according to good order and laws and usages of Government." A paper accompanying this memorial, set forth in detail their various grievances, and the great necessity "of putting a stop to all the world voting in Ashford." Particular people could not educate their children at their own charge peaceably and quietly, rates duly paid by honest men were used in collecting other men's rates and paying for warrants; meetings pronounced illegal when those that bore the biggest charge were present. Lastly, they declared that there were already fourteen freemen in Ashford, and eleven more who might be made legal voters, and suggested "that twenty-five qualified voters were more likely to carry on the prudential affairs of the town according to good order, peace, unity and

Colony laws, than a mixt multitude of forty-eight, qualified and unqualified together."

On the other hand, Pitts, Humphrey and others, claiming to represent a majority of the town, prayed that they might retain their liberty to choose as heretofore, "for if none were allowed to vote but those qualified to vote by law, affairs would be managed by very few hands and be to the discontent of many." A rate for the more easy carrying on the civil and religious interests of the town was requested by both parties.

Upon consideration of these petitions, the Assembly resolved, "That inasmuch as the Act of Assembly referred to, enabling the said inhabitants to choose town officers, being made when there was not a reasonable number of inhabitants qualified according to the most strict rules of the law for voting, that the said act was not intended to restrain the inhabitants from voting, though not so strictly qualified; and thereupon affirm all the former acts of the said town in electing town officers, and particularly the officers chosen in December last." Listers, then chosen by the town, were ordered, with the assistance of Deacon Kendall and William Ward, to make and perfect the lists, and it was further enacted, "That for time to come the said town proceed in the choice of their town officers according to the rules prescribed in the law for other towns." Two shillings, annually, on every hundred acres of land for the space of four years, were also granted for the support of the ministry.

This decision of the Court pacified the belligerents, and restored harmony and order. At the town-meeting in March, when "all the world" still voted, it was ordered, "not to be at the expense of hiring a schoolmaster," but under the new regulations a change was soon effected, and a schoolmaster hired by the town—October, 1723,—to keep school half a year. Other public matters were now arranged. The rate furnished means for carrying on the work of Mr. Hale's house, still unfinished, and repairing the glass of the meeting-house. It was voted, "To clear the value of four acres about the meeting-house as it is bounded, and keep it cut down yearly, and any other places across the roads that are stated." It being discovered that the Windham and Woodstock farmers were much inclined to pasture their cattle on Ashford commons, Benjamin Russel, John Pitts and Nath. Abbot were appointed a committee, "To take care of the neat cattle brought into Ashford to run in the summer, and have a man selected at each end of the town, and when they found any cattle or sheep not belonging to the town to inquire of the inhabitants living near where they were found if they knew who they belonged to, and if they cannot find the owner to drive such cattle out of the town. Thomas Tiffany was, however, allowed to keep his Father Rudd's cattle."

A full military company was formed in Ashford in 1722, with John Perry for captain, Benjamin Russel for lieutenant and Joshua Kendall for ensign. During these years, they suffered much from Indian alarms. Captain Perry proved himself an efficient and courageous officer, and several times furnished the Government important information. Indians were forbidden to hunt in the woods north of the road from Hartford, through Coventry and Ashford, to New Roxbury. A military watch was ordered to be held in Ashford and a scout maintained in the northern part of the town.

The population of Ashford steadily increased, several families removing there whose names are still represented. Joseph Bosworth bought land of Corbin in the east of the town in 1718; Elias Keyes in 1722. In 1722, Edward Sumner of Roxbury—brother of Samuel of Pomfret,—with two associates, bought a thousand acres of land of James Corbin, together with the frame of a barn, in the east of Ashford, adjoining Pomfret. As an inducement to the purchasers to settle on this tract of wild land, Mr. Corbin further offered them to finish the barn with boards and shingles, erect a stack of chimneys and four rooms, and to deliver to them four barrels of good cider annually for four years, they finding barrels and sending them to his house in Woodstock. Thomas Eaton of Woodstock—brother of Jonathan of Killingly—settled in Ashford in 1723, and was granted a pew-spot. In 1725, Robert Knowlton of Sutton purchased a large tract of land in the southwest part of Ashford—now included in the Knowlton neighborhood—and at once settled upon it and began to make improvements, laying out a road on the east side of his farm and freely giving it to the town. Josiah Byles of Boston bought a hundred acres of land on Mount Hope River, in 1726, but did not take personal possession.

The four years release from country tax-paying having expired, Ashford was summoned in 1725, by the General Court, to make a list of polls and ratable estates, but was compelled to crave a further exemption. "The righteous providence of God in his dispensations" had greatly afflicted the inhabitants. A protracted drought cut off the crops the year preceding, a heavy frost had blighted their hopes for the ensuing season, and in addition a family in the town had been brought so low by sickness as to bring a charge of thirty or forty pounds upon the public. Philip Eastman was sent to the Assembly with the tale of their calamities, in the hope "that their deplorable circumstances would move their Honors' tender hearts to drop their goodness upon them, and excuse them from paying taxes for two or three years." His request was granted, with the proviso, "That they pay one penny upon the pound in their list for each year to the Rev. Mr. Hale, in



addition to what they now give him, and that they neither send deputies, nor draw money for their school during said term." With this release, the town again attempted to finish the meeting house and Mr. Hale's house. A committee was also appointed to seat the meeting-house, regarding first planters, age and estates. January 6, 1726, voted, "That the committee shall compleat their work by the first of March and read it off the first lecture-day after, and wave having a school-master." Five men were allowed to build a pew in the hind part of the front gallery, "provided they take it for their seat and do not Rong the light of y<sup>e</sup> window nor Rong the other seats in the front gallery."

In the spring of 1726, the inhabitants of Ashford, with those of adjoining towns, suffered greatly from scarcity of food, occasioned by the failure of crops two successive seasons, and such pitiful stories of the destitution and sufferings of the poor in eastern Connecticut reached Governor Talcott, that he recommended the Assembly to consider their case and relieve the necessity. He had just been informed "that a poor man from Ashford had come to beg relief, and in a mournful, afflicted and affecting manner declared that neither he nor his family had eaten bread or flesh for more than a month, but had lived wholly on brakes, roots and herbs, and wished a committee to inquire into the circumstances." Hezekiah Brainard and John Hooker were accordingly appointed, and upon their report and recommendation, thirty pounds were granted for the relief of "poor and indigent persons in Ashford, Voluntown and Willington, who by frost in the past year were generally cut short in their crops and reduced to a suffering and almost perishing condition." The sum thus granted was to be lodged in the hands of the minister or selectmen of each town, who were to proportionate its distribution.

An unsuccessful attempt was made at this time to procure an additional rate of five shillings a hundred acres upon Mr. Stoddard's land for four years, and Philip Eastman was again employed to press this suit—if successful, to have three pounds when gathered, if not to have nothing. It was probably through the influence of Mr. Stoddard and his representation of the straitened circumstances of the people, that the Old South Church of Boston was induced to give fifteen pounds in money to the Rev. James Hale, for his encouragement.

Notwithstanding the pains taken to ensure a final settlement of the land controversy, new troubles arose. The conditions of compromise had been faithfully carried out, and the territory of Ashford laid out and confirmed to the several parties according to agreement. The needful highways in New Scituate had not been laid out within the time specified, and in May, 1725, the town petitioned to have the time extended, and also for additional ways through this section without

purchase of land, on the ground that at the time of settlement they did not know how many would be needed. At the same session, James Corbin preferred a memorial to the General Assembly, alleging that the annexation of a strip of Ashford land to the town of Willington had prevented his taking up the twenty-five hundred acres assigned him; that Chandler's New Scituate tract contained 2,476 acres more than the deed allowed, and praying that this surplus land might be granted to him and a patent executed in due form. A committee appointed by the Court had already surveyed New Scituate, and found it over-measured, and a plot of the portion now asked for had been made by the county surveyor. This petition was at once granted to Mr. Corbin, provided that in the following session the owners of New Scituate did not show sufficient cause to the contrary,

Captain—now Colonel—John Chandler, who had bought out the other claimants and owned all that was left of this tract, accordingly appeared before the Assembly in October, and in most forcible and indignant language protested against the transfer of this land to Corbin, for the following reasons:—

“ I. That the twenty-five hundred acres allowed to Corbin and partners in settlement were in express terms restrained to their own claim, and that he had never purchased any of the land petitioned for, nor pretended to claim any part of them; that the New Scituate purchase was prior to his, and that he was well acquainted with its bounds before he made his purchase, and had never made any question about them either at the settlement of the committee or at the Gen. Assembly, and had he but imagined he could have gained anything by objecting against our lines it was not likely he would have been silent for he did not use to be so short in his politics as to lose anything for want of asking.

II. Corbin had been favored in his claims far beyond the claimers of New Scituate, making his petition more unreasonable; had never had a partner, and thus large tracts of land confirmed to him and partners had fallen to him alone; expected to reap the benefit of 1,856 acres lying beside Stoddard land, being so much more than was expressed or supposed at time of purchase, and also of 224 acres on the north, both which he had glided smoothly over without giving an account of,—cases mentioned to show how unreasonable it is for him to covet his neighbor's property and do his utmost to defraud honest poor men of their just rights and possessions, under a feigned representation of having been a great sufferer.

III. That whatever is suggested in Mr. Corbin's petition relating to his loss by Willington, there is land enough to be found within his own purchases in Ashford to lay the 2,500 acres upon, and after that a considerable quantity will remain for common use—unless Mr. Corbin has deceived the committee in his account of the sales he had made in his claims; that as for the committee intending that he should take up his portion in that half-mile now cut off, it was a mere chimera, for it does not contain so much, nor did they confine him to any place but to the unsurveyed land in his own claim—but if this be true, why did not Corbin petition the Assembly for an equivalent in some of the unappropriated land in the Colony? But as he has given up a specimen of his veracity, so is this of his *justice*. The force of his argument is this—the Gen. Assembly having wronged him to favor us, now they should wrong us to favor him.

IV. That the land is a part of New Scituate, and always so esteemed by Corbin himself, who had helped survey, lay out and renew the bounds of it.

V. Property already fully settled in 1719.

VI. That the lands petitioned for are the accommodations or individual

property of several others—if the grant of the town of Ashford, the agreement and contract of New Scituate claimers with inhabitants, the solemn settlement of that contract by the Gen. Court's Committee, the acceptance and confirmation by the Gen. Court, and finally the compliance of the people in fulfilling conditions of contract on their part—could make them so. The New Scituate owners have fulfilled conditions and have good estates, and expected to hold them and be protected in their just rights, and now for a patent to be granted to eject these poor honest men of their freeholds, so solemnly settled, against all law or reason—seems to me an intolerable piece of hardship, and beyond all precedent, and I cannot, and think I ought not, silently to see such a designed fraud and piece of injustice carried on as is pursued by Corbin—who positively knows the truth of every article in this plea—and that so amicable and solemn a contract should be broken in upon, and the poor town of Ashford reduced again to confusion, as it most certainly will be if the patent be granted, and hope your Honors will see sufficient cause why the prayer of the petitioners should not be granted.”

Having thus closed his argument, Colonel Chandler begged leave to observe that he desired no more land than his proportion, had performed all conditions according to contract, given Mr. Hale, the worthy minister of Ashford, two hundred acres of land, beside ten acres for a green and sixty for a parsonage, had paid large taxes and expected to pay more, and to promote the peace and quiet of the town had condescended to take up the rags and scraps and refuse of all their claim, and notwithstanding the great charge he had borne had not been able to come to the true knowledge of one lot, for the people had taken it up and sold it hither and thither. He hoped it might be possible that, some time or other, if not cut off by the law of possession, some small scrap of the worst of the lots might be set off to the claimants, and prayed the Court to enable them to take up their complement within the lines of their survey and patent, after which he would most willingly submit the residue to the town for commons and highways, as he had promised and offered to the people at town-meeting, and they had sufficient ground to be persuaded he would make good his word. By granting their requests, the settlement of 1719 would be inviolably preserved, neither claimants or inhabitants damaged and all good men satisfied.

Upon hearing this plea, the Court pronounced the reasons insufficient, and allowed Corbin a patent for the land demanded, with this proviso, “that all the claimers that have regulated themselves according to the order of the committee in 1719, shall not be prejudiced thereby.” Even this decision, so favorable to Corbin, did not satisfy this selfish and unscrupulous speculator. Though no settler was probably ejected from his freehold, yet many of the evils anticipated by Colonel Chandler resulted from the re-opening of this question. Although some fifteen thousand acres of Ashford territory must have been appropriated by Corbin, his claim was urged by successive generations of descendants, involving the town in expensive and harassing lawsuits, and finally subjecting it to the loss of its remaining commons.

## XXXV.

## THE VOLUNTEERS' LAND. DIVISION. SETTLEMENT. ADDITION.

IN October, 1696, Lieutenant Thomas Leffingwell of Norwich, and Sergeant John Frink of Stonington, moved the General Court, "that they, with the rest of the English volunteers in former wars, might have a plantation granted to them." A tract of land six miles square was granted in answer to this request, "to be taken up out of some of the conquered land," its bounds prescribed and settlement regulated by persons appointed by the Court. The volunteers sent "out upon the discovery" of a suitable tract found their choice very limited. Major Fitch, the Winthrops and others had already appropriated the greater part of the conquered land, and the only available tract remaining within Connecticut limits was a strip bordering on Rhode Island, a few miles east of Norwich, and upon reporting this "discovery" to the General Court, "Captain Samuel Mason, Mr. John Gallup and Lieutenant James Avery were appointed a committee to view the said tract, and to consider whether it be suitable for entertainment of a body of people that may be able comfortably to carry on plantation work, or what addition of land may be necessary to accommodate a body of people for comfortable subsistence in a plantation way." After taking three years for viewing and considering, the committee reported favorably, and in October, 1700, Lieutenant Leffingwell, Richard Bushnell, Isaac Wheeler, Caleb Fobes, Samuel Bliss, Joseph Morgan and Manasseh Minor, moved for its confirmation to the volunteers, which was granted, "so far as it concur with the former act of the General Assembly, provided it bring not the Colony into any inconvenience"—or, as afterwards expressed,—“do not prejudice any former grant of the Court.” A large part of the tract thus granted is now comprised in the town of Voluntown. Its original bounds were nearly identical with those of the present township, save that eastward it extended to Pawcatuck River.

Little can now be learned of the primitive condition of this region. It was a waste, barren frontier, over-run by various tribes of Indians, and after the Narraganset War claimed by the Mohegans. Massashowitt, sachem of Quinebaug, also claimed rights in it. No Indians are believed to have occupied it after the war, nor were any white inhabitants found on it when made over to the volunteers.

July 1, 1701, the grantees met in Stonington, to make arrangements for survey and appropriation. Richard Bushnell was chosen clerk of the company, and desired to make out a list of names of volunteers,



and also to make entry of such votes as should be passed. Thomas Leffingwell, James Avery, John Frink and Richard Smith were chosen a committee, "to pass all those that shall offer themselves as volunteers." Captain Samuel Mason was granted by the company an equal share or interest in that tract of land.

Some years passed before the division was completed. The territory was still in dispute. The Mohegan claim was not adjusted till 1705, when their bounds were formally surveyed and established by Captain John Chandler—Captain John Parke, Edward Colver and Samuel Sterry, assisting. Quatchiack, an aged Pachaug Indian, familiar with this region, a Mohegan and two Shetuckets, helped point out the bounds. Beginning at Ahyohsupuck—a pond in the north bound of Stonington—they ran the line north one mile, to a pond called Mahmansuck, near the present west bound of Voluntown; thence, a little east of north, three miles, to a very small pond with the very large name of Toshconwongganuck; thence, a mile and a half to a pine hill—the site of the present Line-meeting-house. Proceeding northward over a neck of land, "from whence they could see Egunk Hill and the Flat Rocks," they came to Egunk, near the great cold spring—Egunksunkapong,—at which place, being dark, they took up their lodging. In the morning they were joined by Major Fitch, and proceeded on their course, measuring and laying the line over the rough hill-top till they came to Pathigwadehaug—the north end of Egunk Hill, six and a half miles from Egunksunkapong, where a great spring issued out, "forty rods west of Moosup River, where the road goes from Plainfield to Providence," and ran down into the river. Thence, leaving the Moosup on the west, they traveled on to the Whetstone Country.

Only a narrow strip of the Volunteer's Land was appropriated by the Mohegans under this survey, but so large a slice was taken from them by Rhode Island during the summer, "that they feared their intended purpose of settling a plantation so accommodable for a Christian society as they desired," was frustrated. A meeting of the volunteers was held, November 14, 1705, when, finding that though their tract was greatly broken by the late agreement made by the Commissioners for the Colonies, there was still considerable left—a committee was empowered to go forth and use such methods as were necessary for finding out the number of acres left within the boundaries, make a thorough survey of the same, which should be computed and laid out in as many lots as there were volunteers, and to number them and lay them equally for quantity and quality, only reserving one thousand acres for the disposal of the company to pay necessary charges. This work was accomplished during the winter, and the Volunteer's Land made ready for distribution. One hundred and sixty persons had enrolled

their names as desirous to share the benefit of this grant—residents of New London, Norwich, Stonington, Windham, Plainfield, and other neighboring towns. The list comprised not only officers and soldiers but ministers, chaplains and such as had served the Colony in civil capacity during the war. April 17, 1706, a meeting was held, and in accordance with a vote, "To go on and draw lots upon that part of the land laid out," the grant was made out to the following proprietors:—

Thomas Wooster.	-John Fish.	Jonathan Armstrong.
Major Edward Palmes.	-Samuel Fish.	-Samuel Stanton.
-Capt. George Denison.	Wm. Williams.	Robert & Daniel Stanton.
Sergt. Thomas Leffingwell.	-George Denison.	James Morgan.
-Major Wait Winthrop.	Wm. Denison.	John Kinne.
Rev. James Fitch.	Nath. Bidlow.	John Lashum.
-Capt. James Avery.	Henry Stephens.	John Woodhouse.
-Sergt. John Frink.	Edward Fanning.	Joseph Morgan.
-James Avery.	John & Thomas Fanning.	Nath. Parke.
-John and Thomas Avery.	John Bennet.	William Douglas.
Joshua Baker.	William Bennet.	-Manasseh Minor.
John Wicknor.	Thomas Rose.	James Willet.
Ephraim Colver.	Philip Bill.	-James Noyes.
William Potts.	Dewey Springer.	John Stanton.
Edward Colver.	Ezekiel Maynor.	Joseph Stanton.
Samuel Yeomans.	William Wheeler.	-Joshua Abell.
John Levins.	Wm. Roberts.	Thomas Rhoad.
-Aaron and John Stark.	John Denison.	William Knight.
James York.	Matthew Griswold.	Matthew Jones.
Thomas Bill.	Richard Lord.	Richard Dart.
-Thomas Minor.	Stephen De Wolf.	Samuel Hough.
Richard Bushnell.	Henry Peterson.	William Hough.
Samuel Lothrop.	Daniel Crumb.	Abel More.
Solomon Tracy.	Richard Smith.	Jeremiah Blaque.
John Wiley.	John and Francis Smith.	John Plumb.
Samuel Fitts.	Samuel Stephens.	Tho. Hungerford.
Robert Plank.	Nicholas Cottrell.	John Packer.
Peter Spicer.	Moses Hintly.	Samuel Packer.
Jonathan Rudd.	Henry Hall.	Nath. Holt.
Richard Cook.	John Pamiton.	Robert Lord.
Thomas Parke.	Henry Bennet.	John Wade.
Henry Elliot.	William Champlin.	Richard Smith.
Thomas Bliss.	Samuel Rogers.	Edward DeWolf.
Ira Wheeler.	John Choler.	Aaron Huntley.
Peter Crosse.	Capt. Pembleton.	James Murphy.
Jonathan Gennings.	John Hill.	Robert Holmes.
Caleb Hobbes.	Samuel Frisbie.	Daniel Comstock.
John Gallup.	Samuel Struther.	George Chappel.
Adam and William Gallup.	John Plant.	Thurston Risnond.
-Nath. Cheesborough.	Samuel Fox.	Hugh Rowland.
-Ephraim Minor.	Jacob Foye.	John Lothrop.
-John and Samuel Minor.	-Clement Minor.	James Welch.
John Ashcraft.	William Pendall.	Daniel Clark.
Joshua Holmes.	Daniel Grubbins.	Edward Shipman.
Capt. Ebenezer Johnson.	John Hough.	Joseph Ingraham.
Joseph Wheeler.	Thomas Williams.	James Danielson.
Moses Wheeler.	Joseph Waterhouse.	Joseph Colver.
Daniel Tracy.	Samuel Robbins.	William Billings.
-Edmund Fanning.	Stephen Richardson.	Jonathan Birch.
John Shaw.	Roger & Sam'l Richardson.	William Johnson.
-Ebenezer Billings.	-Gershom Palmer.	

One hundred and fifty equal lots were laid out in the Volunteers' Land, some of the proprietors receiving but half a share. Samuel Coy was allowed eighty acres—a parcel of land already surveyed—and Samuel Fish to take his lot where he had made improvement. The latter was probably the first settler. Very little progress was made for several years. The soil was poor, the location remote and inconvenient, offering few inducements to settlers. Landed affairs were managed by the previous committee. The thousand acres reserved for the use of the company were laid out in the south of the tract, in a strip four miles from east to west, and twenty-five rods from north to south, and sold to Thomas Banister for £130, May 22, 1703. At the request of the proprietors, the name of Voluntown was appropriately given to the plantation. The settler next following Samuel Fish is believed to have been John Gallup—the Plainfield “land-grabber”—choosing a home in a plantation where land grabbing could be more freely exercised, and settling in the northeast of the township on Wassaquassick Lake, about 1710. Very few of the volunteers took personal possession of their allotments. John and Francis Smith, Robert Parke and one or two others, settled after a time within the township. Some of the proprietors sold out their rights at an early date, receiving five, six, eight, eleven and twelve pounds an allotment. “A pair of come-four year-old steers” was once exchanged for eighty-six acres. Others retained their shares through life, renting out farms whenever practicable. Settlers came in slowly, taking up land in various localities. Thomas Reynolds settled near Pawcatuck Lake; Thomas Coles in the south of the tract. John Campbell, John Safford, Obadiah Rhodes and Samuel Whalley were among the earliest inhabitants of Voluntown. In 1714, attempt was made to lay out more land and facilitate settlement. At a meeting of the committee in Norwich, it was agreed, “To send out three persons to gain as good understanding as they can come at where Uncas' hereditary bounds go from station to station, so far as Voluntown is concerned.” Manasseh Minor was appointed for this work, with liberty to call out such Indians as were best able to give light. Lieutenant Leffingwell, Captains Richard Bushnell, James Avery, John Hough and John Prentts, Lieutenant Solomon Tracy, Deacon Manasseh Minor and Mr. John Gallup were elected committee for the management of the plantation, and granted by the General Assembly “the liberty of appearing and maintaining the rights of the volunteers as there should be occasion.”

One hundred and forty-four lots were laid out during the summer by Prentts, Minor and Gallup on behalf of the committee. The one hundred and forty-fifth lot was laid out to John Stoyell on Benajah Bushnell's right, adjoining the southeast corner of Plainfield at the

foot of Egunk Hill. Three other lots in this vicinity were also laid out to Mr. Stoyell. This gentleman—afterwards “school-master in Pomfret”—purchased much other land in Voluntown and became a prominent actor in some very important controversies.

The loss of so large a portion of their territory to Rhode Island was very serious to the Volunteers and their right to a suitable equivalent, was the first to be urged and maintained by the committee. In October, 1715, they petitioned the General Assembly, that the Colony land lying north of their tract might be annexed to it in place of that taken from them. This was the “vacant land” so persistently besought by Plainfield, and already occupied by some of her former inhabitants. A grant of three hundred acres allowed to the Reverend Mr. Coit of Plainfield, in this country land—laid out north of Egunk Hill, where the Providence road crossed Moosup’s River—was conveyed by him to Francis Smith and Miles Jordan, who there established themselves, north of Voluntown. Smith soon put up a mill and opened his house for the accommodation of travelers. The lack of a bridge at this point was found a great inconvenience, as the river was high and often dangerous. Smith and Jordan prepared timber and petitioned in 1714, for a committee to select a suitable place, and there erected a suitable and convenient bridge, receiving in payment, one, ninety and the other sixty acres of land, on the Providence road. This convenient road and pleasant locality soon attracted other settlers—John Smith, Ebenezer and Thomas Dow, Robert and John Park, Robert Williams, Nathaniel French and others—who attended church and enjoyed privileges in Plainfield and joined with its inhabitants in 1715, in petitioning for annexation of the country land to that township. The Assembly considered the applications and ordered a plot of the land in question to be made—if either of the parties petitioning would be at the charge of it—together with an account of said land that so it might be able to resolve upon its future regulation.

Probably neither party chose to assume the charge of this survey as the matter was left unsettled for several years. Voluntown meanwhile increased slowly in population, but made few other advances. May 8, 1718, William Roberts, John Stoyell, Samuel Butler, Miles Jordan, Richard Williams and Samuel Church—inhabitants of Voluntown and the country land north of it—represented to the General Court “their miserable estate and condition, living in Voluntown and being at a great distance from any meeting-house and destitute of y<sup>e</sup> public worship of God and ever likely to be, land being so much broken and nothing but barren pine-holes and never likely to be inhabited so as to maintain a minister (unless it be remedied by your Honors).” The remedy proposed by these petitioners, was that the Voluntown proprietors should have their property to themselves, as specified by the grant,



viz., all south of old Greenwich Path, while all the land north of that path, together with Egunk Hill and the vacant country land, should be made one town and incorporated with civil, military and ecclesiastic powers, that so they might carry on the work of the gospel and have a gospel ministry. This proposal to leave the greater part of Voluntown out in the cold and establish church ordinances in the more attractive region northward, was rejected by both houses. A still more earnest petition signed by John and Samuel Gallup, John and Francis Smith, Thomas Cole, Joshua Jaffrey and others was sent in October, begging the Court to consider their deplorable condition, still destitute of public means of grace after so many years of settlement. Captain Daniel Brewster, Lieutenant Joseph Backus and Mr. John Sprague were then appointed a committee, to view the circumstances of Voluntown and the land lying eastward of Plainfield, and make report at the next Assembly. They found eleven families settled within the limits of Voluntown, numbering "about 119 souls," some of them in low circumstances, yet a considerable number more good inhabitants designed to be there soon and many more that would come if encouraged by Court; in the country land north they found twelve houses and families, and reported to the Court, that neither the bounds of Voluntown as already granted, nor the lands north not annexed were sufficient alone to make a good parish, but that a good parish might be made consisting partly of both. The Assembly then ordered, May, 1719, that so much of the lands lying north of the present bounds of Voluntown and east of the bounds of Plainfield, as should be needful for the making a good parish there for comfortable carrying on the worship of God, should be annexed to Voluntown and forever after be accounted within the bounds of that town. The committee previously appointed were to perform this work and also to sell and dispose of the Government's right to said land to such good inhabitants as should be willing to settle upon them—the money so obtained to be appropriated towards building a state-house at Hartford. The addition thus granted included the territory of the present town of Sterling, save a mile in length at the northern extremity, which was left in the possession of the Colony.

The survey and annexation were accomplished as rapidly as possible by John Plumb, surveyor for New London County, and thirty lots laid out and made over to the following purchasers:—

James Welch.	Ebenezer Cooper.	Robert Williams.
<u>James Dean.</u>	Ebenezer Dow.	John Smith.
Thomas Ross, two lots.	Josiah French.	John Jordan.
William Harris.	Capt. Thomas Williams.	Robert Park.
Joshua Jeffries.	Thomas Dow.	Miles Jordan.
Samuel Butler.	Henry Cobb.	Ishmael Speck.
		John Park.

One lot was reserved for the future minister. Some "laid out in woods," were probably unsalable. Some of the purchasers were well-known residents of Plainfield; others were already settled in Voluntown on the addition; a few were new inhabitants. Their purchases were confirmed to them by the Gen. Assembly, October, 1719, on condition, that each should "have a tenantable house and settle themselves within the space of three years and continue to live there three years after such settlement, upon the forfeiture of said purchase." The horse-brand assigned for the settlement was the figure U.

The residents in the former north part of Voluntown and the addition, who had hoped to secure a snug little township by themselves, were not quite satisfied with this transfer to a poor, unsettled, rambling township, and would have even preferred absorption by Plainfield. Lands formerly used as commons were now distributed to private owners. Some of these dissatisfied settlers joined with Plainfield in agitation for a re-settlement. John Smith and John Stoyell thus told their own story to the Assembly:—

"Honored Gentlemen.—After the committee had well viewed land in Voluntown and north of it—having a peculiar regard to Parish discipline and not willing to settle any too remote from the place of worship—said committee went to Plainfield's northeast corner and run the line south one mile . . . and then run the line east to y<sup>e</sup> supposed line between the Colonies and began to lay out lots and dispose of them to such as they saw reason to admit inhabitants, six lots bounded north on said line, and continued laying out and granting and disposing southward from the above six lots, joining lot to lot to the number of twenty-two—whereupon, the inhabitants thereupon will not be well able to subsist without outlet and commonage. Southward, they can not well be accommodated by reason of y<sup>e</sup> barrenness of the land, and being so remote from most of them and also a river, and very steep land on each side, which is not convenient for cattle to travel up and down—wherefore, we are necessitated to pray your Honors to grant us the mile of land on the north . . . without which, we shall not be able to subsist, neither to pay our duty to church and commonwealth. We pray you to render compassion as fathers to their children, leaving it with you to do as you think best in behalf of purchase and inhabitants."

Twenty-seven inhabitants of Voluntown also petitioned for this strip of land and even offered fifty pounds for it, but all were denied and the mile north of Voluntown remained for several years in contention between that township, Plainfield and Killingly.

### XXXVI.

TOWN ORGANIZATION. SELECTION OF MEETING-HOUSE. CALL OF MINISTER. CHURCH ORGANIZATION. ORDINATION OF MR. DORRANCE.

THE Proprietors of Voluntown were greatly pleased with the addition secured to them and encouraged to hope that after so long delay they might carry out "their intended purpose of settling a

plantation accommodable for a christian society." Many of the original owners were now deceased, but their children or representatives maintained their interest in the grant. At a meeting of proprietors, April 26, 1720, it was voted, That five thousand acres lying near the pond at the head of Pawcatuck River, shall be disposed of at the discretion of the committee to such gentlemen as may best serve the interests of Volunteers. In modern phrase, the lands were to be placed "where they *would do the most good.*" The continued encroachments of Rhode Island made them anxious to secure favor in high places. In accordance with this vote, a thousand acres of land were presented to Governor Saltonstall; another thousand to Jeremiah Dummer, agent for Connecticut in Great Britain; five hundred, each, to William Pitkin, Richard Christophers, Samuel Eels, Joseph Talcott and Roger Wolcott; two hundred, each, to Jonathan Law and James Wadsworth; one hundred to Caleb Bushnell and fifty to John Stoyell—but whether the interests of the Volunteers were promoted by this disposition, is not apparent. In response to a request from the agents of Voluntown, a deed of release and quit-claim to all the lands within the grants was confirmed to the proprietors by the Assembly.

The inhabitants of Voluntown, encouraged by the addition of territory and the arrival of new settlers, began to take some preliminary steps towards organization as a township. In the autumn of 1720, the Reverend Mr. Wilson was secured for a minister and the first recorded public act of the inhabitants, March 14, 1721, was the choice of Robert Park and Jacob Bacon, "to go to treat with y<sup>e</sup> Reverend Mr. Wilson of y<sup>e</sup> reason, of his inclining to depart from us, and whether we can possibly keep him." John and Francis Smith were chosen as assistants. April 25, Nathaniel Deane and Jacob Bacon were ordered, "to draw up something in writing to send up to y<sup>e</sup> General Assembly in May, relating to our present circumstances." This writing, asking for power to lay a tax, and town privileges, was carried to the Assembly by Francis Smith and called out the following enactment:—

"That all the Volunteers rights or lots (whether greater or lesser) in number of acres, within the original grants in said town, is hereby taxed at eight shillings per year for the term of five years next ensuing, for the support of a minister and building a meeting-house in said town; and the one thousand acres that Mr. Thomas Banister, deceased, bought of the proprietors of said town is hereby taxed at three pounds per year for the term and use aforesaid; and the addition that was added in 1719, to said town . . . is likewise taxed at ten shillings per hundred acres, and so likewise in lesser or greater quantities for the terms and use aforesaid."

↳Lieutenant Christopher Avery, Mr. John Gallup, Mr. Robert Parke, Samuel Whalley and Ebenezer Dow were appointed a committee to set up notification of this tax with power to distrain upon the personal estate of any neglecting or refusing to pay his proportion—the money

to be paid to Captain Williams of Plainfield, treasurer to receive and disburse it. The committee was empowered to act jointly with the committee for the proprietors of old Voluntown, in settling a minister's salary out of this present tax and to improve all the residue of the money for building a meeting house. And it was farther provided that if the tax thus raised should not be sufficient for the ends specified, inhabitants and proprietors should have power to levy a rate upon all the ratable estate so far as might be needful.

The Assembly also granted unto the inhabitants of Voluntown, the power and privilege of choosing their own town officers, and carrying on their own town affairs, and if any difficulty should arise among the inhabitants and proprietors about placing the meeting-house, the matter should be determined by a committee from the Assembly. Owners of lands sold for rates were allowed liberty of redemption on payment of necessary charges.

Thus a quarter of a century after the grant to the Volunteers, the tract then assigned them was invested with town privileges. Town government was organized June 20, 1721. Justice Williams of Plainfield served as moderator and administered the oath to public officers. Jacob Bacon was chosen town-clerk; John Gallup, John Safford, Ebenezer Cooper, Samuel Whalley and Nathaniel French, selectmen; Thomas Cole, constable; Francis Smith, toller. Thirty-seven persons were admitted inhabitants, showing a large increase since the addition of territory. It was voted to call a minister to settle among us here—Joseph Watson. Mr. Watson declined and Mr. Billings was secured—afterwards settled over Canada Society. Meetings were held on the Sabbath for divine service at Thomas Cole's in the south, and John Smith's in the north of the town, alternately. In December, it was voted, To call Mr. Billings to preach Sabbath days through the winter. John Tyler, Obadiah Rhodes and Ebenezer Dow were added to the selectmen. A pound for the town was ordered at Francis Smith's house. Three men were chosen "to lay out highways least to y<sup>e</sup> damage of y<sup>e</sup> owners of land and y<sup>e</sup> best advantage for the neighborhood." It was voted, "That those admitted by y<sup>e</sup> Colony's committee to be proprietors in Voluntown should not act with y<sup>e</sup> present inhabitants in the prudential affairs of y<sup>e</sup> town." As none but "wholesome inhabitants" were desirable, Jethro Jeffard was required forthwith to depart out of town on penalty of transportation, and Joseph Tiffany received soon after a similar summary sentence of banishment. John Smith, at the crossing of Moosup's River, received liberty from the selectmen and grand jurors to keep a house of entertainment.

The location of the meeting-house already excited discussion and differences—the awkward shape of the town, eighteen or twenty miles



in length and only three or four in width, making it extremely difficult to accommodate its scattered inhabitants. In March, 1722, "it was voted clearly":—

"That we shall begin on the south side of Thomas Bannister's land and so measure a north line to y<sup>e</sup> north end of Voluntown and then to make a centre upon said line, by running one east and west, and to begin at Rhode Island's pretended line and so to y<sup>e</sup> west line of Voluntown and so to make a centre on y<sup>e</sup> said north and south, east and west lines, and not to vary more than one-fourth of a mile from the centre. John Safford and Samuel Butler were chosen to carry the chain, John Gallup and John Tyler as selectmen to see that the chain be truly carried and John Smith to carry y<sup>e</sup> compass, and to begin said work April 24, and proceed until it be completed, and all were sworn to a faithful discharge of y<sup>e</sup> work."

The work was faithfully discharged according to instructions and on April 27, the committee reported, "That they found the centre of Voluntown westerly of the west clump of pines on Pine Hill, a place not suitable, and had selected a spot one-fourth of a mile north-west from it"—a site two miles northeast of the present Line-meeting-house. The town accepted the report, and in October following, voted, "To build a meeting-house thirty feet by twenty-six and sixteen stud." Thomas Cole, John Gallup and Ebenezer Dow were chosen to take care of building meeting-house until it be built, and to find a suitable burying-place, and to secure not less than three acres of land for both purposes. Meetings were to be held alternately at John Smith's and Ebenezer Dow's till the meeting-house be fit to meet in.

As sheep and swine as well as cattle were allowed to go at large, a large number of pounds was found needful. People north of Moosup's River were allowed to build a pound by the house of Samuel Butler; those south of Eunk Swamp, the privilege of one by Samuel Whalley's. Twelve persons protested against this vote, "the town not being bound and the Colony line not run and it being doubtful if these people could be claimed as inhabitants." A pound was also built near Jacob Bacon's. Efforts were made to secure a permanent minister, Mr. Billings having declined a call. It was stated that Robert Campbell sent for "Mr. Boyd, reported to be an orthodox minister, to preach the gospel to us," but his success is not reported. Samuel Dorrance next appeared and gave such good satisfaction that he was invited in December to preach till the following May. Mr. Dorrance was a Scotch Presbyterian, lately arrived from Ireland, a graduate of Glasgow University, licensed to preach in 1711, by the Presbytery of Dumbarton and bringing with him satisfactory testimonials of his ministerial character and standing from several Associations in Scotland and Ireland. Farther acquaintance confirmed the favorable impression first made by him, and April 17, 1725, the Voluntown people met together to give him a formal call. They decided, first, to give him a call in writing, and give in their votes by subscription, "every man that was for y<sup>e</sup>

settlement" desiring to have their names entered to the following document :—

"We, the inhabitants and proprietors of Voluntown, having by ye providence of God had for some considerable time ye opportunity to experience your ministerial gifts and qualifications, by which we have received such satisfaction and are so well contented that it has pleased God to incline us to give you a call to settle with us in ye work of the gospel ministry, and in case of acceptance, agree to give you sixty pounds a year for the present, and also fifty pounds in such species as shall be suitable to promote your building or settlement.

3. Ye town does give their free vote that you shall have that lot laid out by the committee for the minister that should settle with us :—

John Smith.	Daniel Dill.	John Ashcraft.
Thomas Cole.	Robert Parke.	William Thomas.
John Keigwin.	Benjamin Williams.	William Deane.
Richard Williams.	John Gallup.	Ephraim Dow.
Samuel Church.	Nath. Ayers.	Thomas Welch.
Robert Campbell.	John Ayers.	Jonathan Roberts.
John Campbell.	Samuel Gallup.	<u>Nath. Deane.</u>
Robert Jackson.	Thomas Dow.	Joseph Bowditch.
Robert Miller.	Ebenezer Dow.	Noah Rogers.
Thomas Gallup.	Joseph Marsh.	Jacob Bacon."

A negative was called for, but not one answered. On the same day, a number of those present, as a special token of their love and goodwill for their prospective minister, offered the following free gifts over and above their equal proportion raised by vote of the town :—

John Smith, five thousand shingles.	John Campbell, two hundred clab-boards.
Thomas Cole, three pounds money, in shingle nails.	Robert Miller, work.
John Gallup, five pounds, in work.	Samuel Church, work.
Robert Parke, three pounds, in boards and plank.	Robert Jackson, one thousand shingles.
Daniel Church, carting.	Wm. Parke, work.
Samuel Gallup, five pounds, money.	John Ashcraft, work.
Thomas Gallup, breaking up two acres of land.	Samuel Gallup, a cow and calf.
James Marsh, money.	Daniel Dill, work.
Robert Campbell, work.	Jacob Bacon, work.
William Thomas, two hundred of clab-boards.	Stephen Richardson, two pounds, money.
William Gallup, ten shillings.	Deacon Jacob Warren, Plainfield, two pounds ten, money.
Nath. Deane, one pound, money.	John Butler, one pound ten, money.
Jonathan Roberts, work.	William Deane, one pound, money.

After due deliberation, Mr. Dorrance, with humble thanks, accepted the call. August 16, Samuel Day, Robert Parke, John Smith, Samuel Church, Nath. Deane, Jacob Bacon, Thomas Cole and John Gallup were appointed a committee to apply themselves to the Association next at Groton, and take their advice about the ordination of Mr. Dorrance and to act according to their direction and to take care of what is needful to be done. The Association having examined the credentials of Mr. Dorrance, signified to the committee their approval of their choice and readiness to assist in his regular and orderly settlement; the Assembly granted the usual liberty, and on October 15, 1723, a fast was kept preparatory to ordination. The Rev. Mr. Coit

of Plainfield preached in the morning, Mr. Lord of Preston in the afternoon, after which, "such as were in full communion and clothed with satisfactory testimonials—in order that they might distinguish themselves from heretics and other erroneous persons"—subscribed the following confession and obligations:—

"We believe that the Word of God is a perfect rule of faith and obedience, and acknowledge and believe that confession of faith composed by the Rev. Assembly of divines, sitting at Westminster:—

Samuel Dorrance.	John Smith.	Samuel Church.
Robert Gordon.	Daniel Dill	Adam Kasson.
Thomas Cole.	Thomas Welch.	William Kasson.
John Kasson.	Jacob Bacon.	David Hopkins.
John Campbell.	Daniel Cass.	Charles Campbell.
Robert Campbell.	John Dorrance.	Nath. French.
Samuel Campbell.	George Dorrance.	John Gibson.
John Gordon.	Samuel Church, Jun.	James Hopkins.
Alexander Gordon.	John Dorrance, Jun.	John and Robert Parke.
Ebenezer Dow.	Nathaniel Deane.	William Rogers.
John Keigwin.	Vincent Patterson.	John Gallup."
William Hamilton.	Robert Miller.	
Robert Hopkin.	Patrick Parke.	

This Voluntown church, thus adopting the Westminster Confession of Faith, was the first, and long the only Presbyterian church in Connecticut. It is not probable that all whose names are affixed to this Confession signed it on the day of organization, though it was evidently a strong and vigorous church at the outset.

Letters were sent to the ministers in New London, Canterbury, Preston new society, Plainfield and Killingly, inviting them to join in the ordination of Mr. Dorrance, October 23. Up to this date, the proceedings of town and people had been marked by entire harmony and unanimity, but on the day appointed for ordination a violent opposition was manifested. Various conflicting elements were working among the people. A large number of new inhabitants had arrived during the summer. Mr. Dorrance had been accompanied to New England by several families of Scotch-Irish Presbyterians, who had followed him to Voluntown and settled there, buying land in various localities. His brothers, John and George Dorrance, Gordons, Campbells, Kassons, Hopkins, Keigwin, Hamilton and Gibson were already admitted as inhabitants, and had assisted in organizing the church. The advent of these foreigners, though men of good position and excellent character, was looked upon with great suspicion by the older settlers. A somewhat loose and disorderly population had previously gathered in this border township, inclined like their Rhode Island neighbors to Baptist sentiments, averse to religious restraints, and especially jealous of Popery and Presbyterianism. The adoption of the Westminster Confession by the new church caused immediate outbreak and rebellion. The Council met according to appointment—

the Rev. Messrs. Lord, Coit, Estabrook and Fisk, with their messengers, and were proceeding regularly to business when, to their amazement, a number of people appeared, determined to obstruct the ordination of Mr. Dorrance, and, "in a riotous, disorderly and unchristian way," without waiting for prayer or ceremony, presented the subjoined remonstrance:—

"We, whose names are under-written, do agree that one of our New England people may be settled in Voluntown to preach the gospel to us, and will oblige ourselves to pay him yearly, and will be satisfied, honored gentlemen, that you choose one for us to prevent unwholesome inhabitants, for we are afraid Popery and Heresy will be brought into the land; therefore, we protest against settling Mr. Dorrance, because he is a stranger, and we are informed he came out of Ireland, and we do observe that since he has been in town that the Irish do flock into town, and we are informed that the Irish are not wholesome inhabitants, and upon this account we are against settling Mr. Dorrance, for we are not such persons as you take us to be, but desire the gospel to be preached by one of our own and not by a stranger, for we cannot receive any benefit for neither soul nor body, and we would pray him to withdraw himself from us."

The names appended to this document were omitted by the scribe, "for prudential reasons," but some, he says, "were not inhabitants; others, such as call themselves Baptists; others, those who live without God." Great clamor and confusion followed. The Council passed the day in hearing these opposers repeat their reasons over and over, but the second day achieved the following "result":—

"1. We esteem the objections offered by the defending party against Mr. Dorrance's ordination, invalid.

2. We judge the people's call of Mr. Dorrance not sufficient.

3. We testify our firm persuasion that Mr. Dorrance's ministerial abilities are unexceptionable.

4. We advise Mr. Dorrance to continue to preach, and the people to endeavor a more regular and comfortable call."

This decision was received with great indignation by a majority of the town, conscious that a minister seldom received a more regular, unanimous, hearty and every way "comfortable call," nor did they hesitate to accuse the ministers of Plainfield and Preston, of attempting for selfish and interested motives, to delay the settlement of the town. Plainfield and Preston *cattle* had hitherto enjoyed free forage on Voluntown commons and their owners were loth to resign this privilege. Report of these proceedings was at once dispatched to Governor Saltonstall, and several leading ministers, who all condemned the non-action of the Council and pronounced the "call" sufficient. The Governor ordered a *very strong* letter to be written, directing the Council to proceed with the ordination, but Mr. Lord refused to serve, because "some of his people had said they would not hear him any more if he did," and Mr. Coit, also, "lest his people should be offended at him in being accessory to deprive them of outgo for their creatures." A new Council was then summoned, from the churches of



old Preston, Windham and Canterbury, which met December 12, 1723. A full memorial was laid before them, showing, "That when Mr. Dorrance was called not one moved his tongue against him, but notwithstanding their unanimity, peace and concord, the Devil and wicked men raised such tumult, noise and confusion, to the scandal of religion, the shame of our nation and the violation of our laws and privileges, that ordination had been prevented. These persons, it was alleged, not only opposed the settlement of a minister, but protested against building a meeting-house, opposing not only the gospel but the civil magistracy; as for their principles, some were Baptists, and some could not be said to be of any; their arguments were made of unchristian aspersions, showing aversion to strangers, contrary to Ex. xxii: 21; John xiii: 34.; and pretending fear of heresy, Presbyterianism and unwholesome inhabitants—but, if the truth was known, they were more afraid that men would see their actions; while their counsellors in adjoining towns had still another end in view—Voluntown lands for commons,—choosing rather to have outgo for their creatures than that Voluntown people should have the gospel of the Creator; but it was hoped that neither noise, nor tumult, nor cunning dealing would hinder the Council from answering the expectation of the town." This memorial was signed by John Gallup, Thomas Cole, John Smith, Jacob Bacon, Robert Parke, Samuel Church and other leading men. The Council pronounced call and reasons sufficient, and ordained Mr. Dorrance as minister of Voluntown church and township, by prayer and laying on of hands. Jacob Bacon and Ebenezer Dow were soon after elected deacons.

### XXXVII.

#### BOUNDARY QUARRELS. MEETING-HOUSE SITE.

THE settlement of religious ordinances was followed, as foreseen by Plainfield and Preston, by other improvements and a more rapid development. In 1724, John Gallup had liberty to build a dam and sawmill, "where he hath begun on y<sup>e</sup> stream that runs out of Mon-hungonnuck Pond," and Robert Parke was allowed a similar privilege on the Moosup. The landed interests of the town were still managed by the proprietors, and their meetings held at New London, Norwich and Stonington, though often obstructed by great rains, heavy floods, bad roads and other inconveniences. As the original records of the grant were kept with Captain Bushnell of Norwich, and the inhabitants

"obliged to be at the oppressive and painful drudgery of going twenty miles to him for a copy of anything wanted," an unsuccessful attempt was made to have them transferred into the hands of the person who kept town records. On the death of Captain Williams of Plainfield, in 1723, a petition was sent for one of their own townsmen to serve as treasurer of the tax money, and Jacob Bacon appointed in the room of their deceased friend. Defects in laying out lots—lapping one upon another and want of proper bounds—were rectified in 1724, by a committee appointed by the proprietors. More highways were then laid out, and pine and other cedar swamps sequestered. Various new inhabitants were from time to time admitted.

With some progress, Voluntown met with many difficulties and drawbacks. The bounds of the town were disputed on every side. Preston and Plainfield averred that the volunteers encroached upon their limits, and endeavored "to swallow up some thousands of pounds' worth of government lands more than their grant." The Rhode Island line was one of those bounds which refused to stay settled, and again and again the inhabitants of Voluntown were "cut off" or "beaten back," while an internal controversy raged with still greater violence between the proprietors of the original grant and the addition. John Stoyell, who had bought up many rights in old Voluntown, as it was called, was very active in this controversy, which was developed in laying out to the proprietors the patents of confirmation granted by the General Court in 1720. The true north bound of the original Volunteer's Land was the point at issue. By the terms of the grant, the volunteers were to begin at the pond at the head of Pawcatuck River—now known as Bailey's—"and from thence to run a north line to the road that goeth from Norwich to Greenwich, and thence a west line to Preston bounds." It was claimed by Stoyell, as agent for the original grantees, that these instructions had not been followed, and that the line established was considerably south of the most northerly point of the path, which had been intended. Plainfield, too, "had beat back Preston half a mile," so that the west end of the bound now abutted on Plainfield instead of Preston bounds, as ordered by the grant. A petition was, therefore, urged, October, 1721, "That the old path from Norwich to Greenwich, and so to Plainfield bounds, might be the north bound."

In response to this request, and to petitions from Plainfield and Preston, Messrs. John Plumb, Joshua Ripley and Josiah Conant were appointed a committee, at the charge of the Colony, to view the proper lines of Voluntown according to the several grants, and also to see whether there be any country land adjoining. These gentlemen met, September 17, 1722, at the house of John Amos, in Preston; heard what

Preston petitioners offered, and then followed the alleged Voluntown bounds, south, east and north, to the head of Pawcatuck River, and thence traveled north in search of Greenwich Path, as indicated by the grant, but found it "very uncertain where it was, and hard to be found by reason of divers paths made since." They therefore crossed over to the west side of the town, where the path was still distinct, and beginning east of Plainfield bounds, ran east about four miles, to the Rhode Island bound, where a path called Dolwen's crossed the ancient Greenwich, "and the agents from Plainfield pleaded that this was the proper place to begin to run the line, and from Voluntown was objected that the path turned from this place more northward, and they should go further." Here, however, they stopped, and ran from this point a line due west a part of the way on the north side of Greenwich Path, then south, then north again, till they came to Plainfield line, four miles and forty rods north of her southeast corner. The line thus laid down was considerably north of that previously indicated, and included a large slice of the addition. No action was taken upon the report of this committee.

The inhabitants of the disputed tract, who had paid for their farms and expended much labor and pains in subduing them, were greatly alarmed at the prospect of having them taken away from them to be distributed among the proprietors of old Voluntown, and in a memorial presented to the General Court, October 11, 1722, averred for themselves and neighbors, "That John Stoyell, for several years, had troubled the Honorable Court with a very wrong representation of the land of Voluntown, by which he seemed to have a design to defraud several of the inhabitants; that he had told Thomas Cole and John Gallup, who had purchased land of him, that he should not hurt their interests they being his good friends, but as for Ebenezer Dow, he might look to the man he bought of, which was Thomas Stevens, for he should turn the said Dow off his land; that Greenwich Path was eight and three-fourths miles from the south line of Voluntown, while the grant allowed but six; that the lots laid out in the addition were all sold but one, reserved for the use of the ministry, and that a change in the patent would be to the great loss, if not ruin, of many of the inhabitants. In the following May, Lieutenant Leffingwell and Richard Bushnell—committee for volunteers—represented to the Assembly:—

"That Voluntown was not yet settled as it ought to be, and that the Volunteers and their heirs were under difficult circumstances. 1. Because several men had lots laid out to them, which other towns claim, so that the Volunteers did not know whether they were the true owners. 2. The tax-committee had sold several lots for one year's tax. 3. Preston's east bounds were never fixed as ye law directs, so that Voluntown's original west bounds are uncertain. They, therefore, prayed for a committee to view, measure,

fix bounds and likewise to examine towns' and particular persons' claims, so that all Voluntown's affairs, together with Plainfield's and Preston's, may be laid before Assembly, by which means they hoped Voluntown would settle and thrive, and needless oaths for the future be prevented. Again, in the act of the Assembly, if inhabitants and proprietors could not agree about the meeting-house spot, a committee was to be sent—and the inhabitants, without consent of proprietors, had stated a place not according to ye righteousness thereof, and had already stated dimensions—thirty-six by twenty-six,—and so they intended to swallow up the proprietors' money, and, therefore, the petitioners prayed that the committee might have power to state place and suitable dimensions—charge to come out of tax-money.”

On the other side, Preston and Plainfield were equally urgent in complaints and petitions, showing:—

“That the committee to run Voluntown lines did not run one line according to order; did not run the north line from the head of Pawcatuck River to Greenwich Path, for they did not go there; did not run the west line; did not run the line of addition,—for themselves, they did not begrudge a good township to the Volunteers, for they well deserve it, neither would they have the country cheated out of land that would fetch thousands of pounds.”

So obscure and complicated were the questions and interests involved in these controversies, that the various committees appointed from time to time wholly failed to disentangle them. After several unsuccessful attempts to settle their difficulties, James Wadsworth and Hezekiah Brainard were appointed, in 1726, to view the lands of Preston and Voluntown, and inquire into the whole affair relating to these troublesome townships.

The erection of a house of worship in Voluntown was greatly delayed by these controversies and others of a more local and sectional character. The jealousy excited by the introduction of foreigners and Presbyterians was not easily allayed, and a lawless element long continued to obstruct peaceable settlement. The chief cause of delay was, however, dissatisfaction with the site selected. The northern part of Voluntown was much the more prosperous and populous. The highway to Providence with its good bridge across the Moosup, convenient access to Plainfield and Killingly, Smith's mill and tavern, better land and other attractions, had drawn thither the better class of settlers. Here Mr. Dorrance was settled, between what is now called Sterling Hill and Oneco. John and George Dorrance, the Gordons and other leading families had also settled in this vicinity. These settlers were very averse to the geographical centre found with so much care by the town's committee, and greatly preferred a fine, commanding hill site, a mile from the Providence highway—the summit of Egunk,—now known as Sterling Hill. Unable, however, to induce the town to reverse its decision, they repaired to the Assembly, May 14, 1724, showing:—

“That the town agreed first that the meeting-house should be placed in the centre, which is not the centre of the present inhabitants, but in an obscure place, far from the country road, and withal surrounded by swamps and



precipices of rocks and bad lands, so that no good ways can be made there without excessive charge to the town, and beg for another committee:—

Robert Williams.	Jacob Warren.	Joseph Bugbee.
William Rogers.	Daniel Lawrence.	Joshua Jeffers.
E. Wheeler.	William Deane.	Nathaniel French.
James Welch.	Robert Park.	Christopher Deane.
Samuel Welch.	James Marsh.	John Gordon.
Ebenezer Dow.	Miles Jordon.	Edmond Gordon.
Henry Cobb.	Samuel Church.	David Dill.
John Park.	Jacob Church.	Thomas Howard."

Several of these petitioners will be recognized as residents of Plainfield, who were anxious to secure this meeting-house in the north of the town to accommodate the inhabitants in the east part of their own township, and had long been accustomed to meddle in Voluntown affairs. A committee of five, was accordingly directed to repair to Voluntown, view, state, and ascertain the place for setting their first meeting house—which concurred with the petitioners, and selected the commanding site on the summit of Egunk so much admired by them. The town refused to accept this decision of the committee, and declined to make any provisions for building a meeting-house upon this site. Regardless of this rebuff, the northern residents proceeded to collect timber and prepare a foundation under the supervision of Thomas Dow. A letter from John Sprague and Joseph Backus—the committee in laying out the addition—to the inhabitants of Voluntown, advised a still further removal of the site to the country road, "for the benefit of the north part of the ways, as more convenient for strangers and travelers; also to move the minister's lot." Benefits ensuing, they thought would more than countervail any damage sustained by the lower inhabitants, who, many of them could attend public worship in Preston. This suggestion was rejected, and in November, Thomas Dow succeeded in raising a meeting-house frame on Egunk Hill. The town still refused supplies and proposed to petition for a new committee. In January, 1725, twenty-seven subscribers judged it necessary for the benefit and peace of the town to acquiesce in the place ascertained by the Court's committee and declared their satisfaction therewith, "being convenient for water, beautiful for situation, free from many troublesome, unhealthy swamps and more beneficial for the greatest part of the people, and protested against any farther alteration in moving the frame." In May, both parties repaired to the Assembly—the northern, stating that the meeting-house was raised on the place ascertained by the committee and might have been finished had the carpenters been furnished with means, and therefore people were constrained to meet for worship in private houses near to one side of the town, which was inconvenient and troublesome and might have been remedied. The central party represented that a majority of the

inhabitants still favored the central location. "Upon hearing the controversy and very great contention that has happened and still continues among the inhabitants of Voluntown . . . respecting the place for setting up the meeting-house for public worship"—Captain James Rogers, Captain Tho. Huntington and Captain Jabez Perkins were appointed to inquire into the state of that whole affair, view the places and make report in October. This committee reported, "That after all, they had better have the meeting-house on the first place, that several non-residents had joined in petition for its removal farther north and that the proceedings were unjust." Upon this report, the Assembly enacted:—

"That Voluntown's first meeting-house shall be set up, erected and finished, with all convenient speed, by the town of Voluntown, upon the spot of land in said town that the inhabitants and proprietors of said Voluntown agreed upon, April 27, A. D. 1722."

This decision was very far from settling the difficulty. The northern party was unwilling to accept the situation, and reiterated to the Assembly, that the place assigned was so barren that no settlement could be made there, and no ways could be made without great cost, and that where the frame was now placed ways were passable and every way better, and that twenty men to one would say this location was the best, and asked for the admission of all church members, householders and proprietors to vote in town-meetings. The request was denied. November 8, a meeting was called to ratify the Court's decision. Several illegal voters were present. The town authorities, strengthened by their late triumph, resolved to maintain the purity of the ballot box. All were put out of the room but original inhabitants; John Tyler took the votes, and a committee was appointed to agree with a carpenter for building the meeting-house on the site first selected by the inhabitants. The northern party still resisted; petitioned that all honest men might vote in town affairs, declined to get new timber for another meeting-house frame when the first might answer, or in any way assist in its erection. The greatest strife and confusion prevailed throughout the town. "Good, honest freeholders, heads of families who paid their dues honestly—Alexander Gordon among them, with a list of a hundred pounds and more—were constantly debarred from town privileges," while men every way incompetent were elected to fill public offices. John Smith was so aroused by the condition of affairs as to formally remonstrate, declaring:—

"That the law saith, those who are chosen for selectmen must be discreet and of good conversation to order ye prudential affairs of ye town, and now look back and consider ye qualification of some ye have chosen. if one of them be one of old Morcas' disciples, and ye other on record for *lying*, which it seemeth to me a very great scandal on ye town, and those who chose them void of ye fear of God and did not consider the welfare of ye church and commonwealth."

So great was the strife and division, that the town voted, "that it desired that the patent granted to Voluntown might be *un-acted* and made void, and that the town be divided by an east and west line into north and south ends, and each end to make and maintain their own bridges and highways." Attempts to go on with the building of the meeting-house in this disturbed condition of affairs were quite suspended.

While Voluntown was thus torn and weakened by factions, she also shared in the distress and scarcity occasioned by the drouth and frosts of 1725-26. Adam Kasson, Jacob Bacon, Thomas Welch and others, who had purchased land in the addition and given security, were compelled to ask for an extension of payment—"more especially because of the providence of God at this present time, by reason of y<sup>e</sup> great scarcity of provisions amongst us, so that it is very hard to make money." The poorer classes suffered so severely that they were included among the recipients of the relief granted by the Assembly.

The Voluntown church, after its organization, increased steadily in numbers, and apparently enjoyed a good degree of harmony. Its members, though quarreling about the meeting-house, were united in their minister and views of discipline. January 1, 1726, a number of ruling elders were chosen—Deacons Bacon and Dow, Captain John Gallup, Robert Parke, Thomas Cole, Nath. French, Adam Kasson, Samuel Hopkins, Charles Campbell and Alexander Gordon—who, with their pastor, were to receive and hear all complaints proper for ecclesiastic consideration, and determine and judge. Save in this respect, it did not differ from other Connecticut churches. It was duly recognized by the New London North Association, and Mr. Dorrance was accustomed to meet and act with that body. After the early jealousy of Mr. Dorrance as a foreigner had subsided, he seemed to secure the affection and good-will of his people, and no further difficulty was manifest till a much later period.

In May, 1726, Voluntown organized its first military company, with John Gallup for captain, Robert Parke for lieutenant and Francis Deane for ensign. The progress of the town had been greatly retarded, and at this date it was much behind its cotemporaries—having no schools nor even a meeting-house, and few roads laid out. Its population was large, but somewhat motley and disorderly, made up of substantial settlers from adjacent townships, sturdy Scotch Presbyterians and lawless Rhode Island borderers. The existence of this latter class, and a hint of its character, is indicated in the following entry, found among the church records:—

"January 17, 1726. The church seriously considering the impious practice of some persons in going to conjurors, commonly so called, to inquire concerning things secret, thought fit to show their dislike of such diabolical

practices by the following declaration, to wit: That whatever person, member of the church, countenances, approves of, goes to, or consults with any person that pretends to declare things secret or forbidden—by a spirit of divination or by curious art,—we humbly conceive guilty of the breach of the first commandment, and ought to be suspended from all special ordinances.”

The “old Morcas” referred to in John Smith’s remonstrance, was probably one of the conjurors whose “diabolical practices” called out this declaration.

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## XXXVIII.

### ERECTION OF WINDHAM COUNTY. GENERAL SUMMARY. ASSOCIATION OF MINISTERS.

IN 1636, the first settlement was made within the limits of the present County of Windham; in 1726, eight towns were therein organized. In these forty years, much had been accomplished. The northeast corner of Connecticut was no longer a savage wilderness. Forests had been leveled, roads constructed, streams bridged, land subdued and cultivated. The aboriginal inhabitants were fast passing away, The wigwam had given place to the farm-house; the tomahawk to the plow. Strong men from the earlier settlements in Massachusetts and Connecticut had led the way to the Nipmuck wilderness—dangers had been braved, hardships borne, difficulties overcome, and now several hundred families were established in the eight townships. Details of the settlement and growth of these towns have been already given. Each had its own trials and difficulties, and each had succeeded in laying those foundations and establishing those institutions so dear to the early settlers of New England. Some favored towns had made rapid progress, others had been impeded by land controversies and other weighty obstacles, but in 1726 each had achieved a church, schools and military organization. Each had settled “a learned and orthodox minister;” had set up mills and tanneries and provided traveling facilities. Public roads connected each town with one or all of the leading business centres of New England—Boston, Hartford and Providence,—and so great was the travel that almost every house on these highways served for a tavern. Woodstock was claimed by Suffolk County, Massachusetts; Windham and Ashford by Hartford County. The remaining towns were included in New London County.

The distance of these towns from their county-seats gave them much



inconvenience, and in 1717, a movement was set on foot, "for the easing of their inhabitants and remedy of their grievance." "A bill that the towns of Lebanon, Windham, Mansfield, Plainfield, Canterbury, Killingly, Pomfret, Coventry and Ashford, bounded easterly by the lines of the Colony, shall be and remain to be one entire county, with the privileges and powers as are given by law to the respective counties; Windham to be the county seat and the county to be known by the name of Windham County," passed the Lower House, October 15, 1717. In the following October, a similar bill, with Hebron added to the towns, was passed by the Lower House, but rejected by the Upper. October, 1719, it was enacted by the Assembly, that there should be a Court of Probate held at Windham, for the towns specified in the bill of 1717—"to be held by one judge and clerk, with powers and privileges as the other courts of probate have in this Colony." This arrangement relieved the inhabitants of northeastern Connecticut of part of their grievance, but as they were still put to the hardship of long travel to the court-houses in Hartford and New London, together with great expense by reason of the length of courts, the demand for a new county became more and more urgent. A bill to this effect was again defeated, in October, 1723. An attempt to procure a surveyor for the north part of New London County was also unsuccessful. The need of such an official was set forth in the following letter from Major Fitch:—

"To the Hon. Speaker of the Lower House, May, 1722.

Be so kind as to offer one thing to ye consideration of ye Lower House, viz., that a surveyor be appointed for ye five towns, viz.: Killingly, Pomfret, Canterbury, Preston and Plainfield, for these reasons: 1. Ye County is same forty miles in length, and but one surveyor. 2. When persons go to get him lose their pains, perhaps ride thirty or forty miles, sometimes he is in one town, sometimes another. 3. If a man rides thirty or forty miles to get at him he must be paid for two days' travel, perhaps to do five shillings' service. 4. Moreover, I lately went down to get him to run a line for me; he told me he could not do it, had for some considerable time been in an ill way, there was so much to do the matter was too hard for him. Then I told him we must have a surveyor in our parts. He answered, 'With all my heart,' he wished there was. This, gentlemen, in faithfulness to my neighbors in the several towns, I humbly offer.—Y<sup>t</sup> am your servant,

JAMES FITCH.

If ye question may be, who shall be the person? take this answer—Mr. Samuel Butts, who hath the most skill."

In October, 1725, it was resolved by the Assembly, "That sundry of the towns in the northeasterly part of the Colony be set off to be a distinct county, and be accordingly furnished with officers; the completing of which, together with the limits of said county, is deferred till May next." In May, 1726, Windham County was thus formally defined and established:—

"Be it enacted, by the Governor, Council and Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same. That the west bounds of

the town of Lebanon, the north bounds of Coventry, the north bounds of Mansfield, till it meets with the southwest bounds of Ashford, the west bounds of Ashford, the east bounds of Stafford, the Massachusetts line on the north, the Rhode Island line on the east, the north bounds of Preston and north bounds of Norwich, containing the towns of Windham, Lebanon, Canterbury, Mansfield, Plainfield, Coventry, Pomfret, Killingly, Ashford, Voluntown and Mortlake, shall be one entire county, and called by the name of Windham.

And it is further enacted, by the Authority aforesaid, That the said town of Windham shall be and remain the county or head town of said county, and that there be held annually two County courts—one on the fourth Tuesday in June, and one on the second Tuesday in December in each year, and two Superior courts for the trial of all causes both civil and criminal, as, and endowed with the same powers and authorities wherewith all the courts in the other counties in this Colony are by law impowered. The Superior courts shall be held on the Third Tuesday in March and the third Tuesday in September, annually.

And, further, it is enacted, That the district of Windham, heretofore appointed and limited for the probate of wills and testaments, shall be extended to and limited by the bounds of the county of Windham, and all cases therein depending, or in any of neighboring districts, shall be determined in the probate wherein they are already brought, and all appeals which shall be granted, shall be to the Superior court in the counties as they are now stated.

And it is further enacted, That all officers, civil and military, proper to said county, and allowed and improved in other counties, shall be allowed, appointed and established for the county aforesaid.

And it is further enacted by the Authority aforesaid, That the sheriffs of the counties of Hartford and New London shall have power to serve all such executions as are in their hands, or may hereafter be directed to them, upon such judgments as are already recovered against any person or persons that live in any of the towns which of late were within their respective precincts and are by this act within the circuit of the county of Windham, as fully to all intents and purposes as though this act had not been made.

And it is further enacted, That all actions, causes and matters whatever, now depending in the County courts of Hartford and New London, by appeal, reserved, continued, or any other way whatever, shall be issued and determined in the said counties of Hartford and New London respectively, either in the said County courts, or as the case may require (in the course of law) by appeal, in the Superior courts, to all intents as though this act had not been had or made."

Three towns, it will be seen, were originally included in Windham County, now beyond its limits. Lebanon, southwest from Windham, was organized as a town in 1700. Mansfield, at first a part of Windham, was set off as a distinct township in 1703. Coventry, west of Mansfield, was made a town in 1711. These were all large and important towns, and added much to the strength of the new county. The little, irregular Mortlake Manor was included in a distinct township.

Of the population of Windham County at this date it is impossible to form even an approximation. It is doubtful if any town, save Windham, numbered a hundred families. A few hundred Indians, chiefly Wabbaquassets and Quinebaugs, were residents of the new county. Mohegans and Shetuckets roved freely through Windham and Canterbury. A small number of negroes were held as slaves in the wealthier families.

The following list gives the ratable property ascribed to each town in October, 1726 :—

	£	s.	d.
Windham, . . . .	10,709	9	0
Lebanon, . . . .	13,875	15	4
Mansfield, . . . .	5,817	0	6
Coventry, . . . .	4,494	7	6
Plainfield, . . . .	6,532	14	0
Canterbury, . . . .	6,229	1	6
Pomfret, . . . .	6,474	0	0
Killingly, . . . .	5,302	10	0
Amount, . . . .	£59,434	17	10

Ashford and Voluntown were not yet sufficiently established to pay rates.

Property was very unequally distributed. Such settlers as were able to buy their land at the outset were soon in comfortable circumstances, but the great mass of the people were poor and found it difficult to pay their taxes. Money was scarce, and so were commodities that brought in money, and many could scarcely raise sufficient food for home consumption. Wheat, rye, corn, barley, flax and hemp were the chief staples of production. Manufactures were limited to leather, potash, coarse pottery and domestic fabrics of linen and woolen.

Very little can now be learned of the social condition of the Windham of 1726. Few glimpses of domestic life have reached us. We can see that they labored hard and suffered many trials and privations; that money was scarce, food sometimes scanty and comforts few—especially in the later towns remote from the older settlement; that there was much coarseness and roughness, much bickering and back-biting and other indications of a low state of civilization. The first generation reared in these new towns was probably inferior in education and culture to their fathers. Schools, poor at best, were maintained with great difficulty; books were scarce, intercourse with older towns infrequent. Home training, the church and the town-meeting—the only educating, refining and stimulating agencies—could not fully counteract the demoralizing influences and tendencies of their isolated position. Details of controversies previously given furnish abundant testimony to the roughness and violence of the times, and church records bear equal evidence to much looseness of morals and many prevailing immoralities. With all their strictness in Sabbath-keeping and catechizing, in family and church discipline, there was great license in speech and manner, much hard drinking and rude merry making, with occasional outbreaks of Border-ruffianism. Training-days were the great festive occasions in all the townships.

The ordinary style of living was still very plain and simple. Houses were small and rough, furniture rude and scanty; food and clothing

mainly of home production. Class distinctions were, however, early developed, and a few favored families were able to adopt and maintain a style of comparative luxury. Ministers were looked up to as social as well as religious leaders, and with their unincumbered homesteads, a salary of sixty to one hundred pounds free from government tax, and abundance of free firewood—were able to live much better than the majority of their people. The inventory of Mr. Whiting's estate, taken in 1725, and that of Mr. Estabrook's two years later, show that these ministers were in extremely comfortable circumstances, and left ample provision for the maintenance and education of their children. Both left valuable libraries, numbering nearly two hundred volumes of standard works. A large supply of bedding was included in their household furniture, a goodly array of pewter and brass, a little silver, chairs and high chests. Carpets and bureaus were then unknown, and earthenware was rarer than silver, yet few ministers' wives of the present generation equal Mrs. Whiting and Mrs. Estabrook in richness and variety of apparel. The latter lady boasted :—

- |   |                            |
|---|----------------------------|
| “ 3 Black crape gowns and petticoats.         | 1 Silk scarf.              |
| 1 Silk stuff double gown, and petticoat.      | 1 Pair stays.              |
| 1 Silk poplin gown and petticoat.             | 1 Head dress.              |
| 1 Silk crape gown.                            | 11 Night caps.             |
| 1 White flannel wrought petticoat.            | 8 Linen aprons.            |
| 1 Stuff petticoat.                            | 6 Linen aprons.            |
| 3 Linen and woolen petticoats.                | 3 Linen and woolen aprons. |
| 1 Linen and woolen (home) gown and petticoat. | 2 Calico aprons.           |
| 1 New camblet riding-hood.                    | 2 Checkered aprons.        |
| 1 New camblet riding-hood.                    | 9 Speckled h. d. k. fs.    |
| 1 Serge riding-hood.                          | 9 Pairs gloves.            |
| 1 Gauze hood.                                 | 2 Fans.                    |
| 1 Black silk hood.                            | 4 Waist-ribbons.           |
| 2 Bonnets.                                    | Amber beads.               |
|   | 4 Pairs stockings.         |
|   | 2 pairs shoes, &c.”        |

The ecclesiastic association of ministers within Windham County limits preceded county organization. The Saybrook Platform, adopted in 1708, as the ecclesiastic constitution of Connecticut, provided, “That the particular pastors and churches within the respective counties in this Government should be one consociation, and the teaching elders of each county one association.” Each church was assumed to be under the constitution of the Colony unless formally dissenting. By this provision, Windham and Ashford churches would be included in Hartford County organization; Plainfield, Canterbury, Pomfret, Killingly and Voluntown in those of New London County. Consociation in the latter county was delayed for many years, but an Association, including all the ministers within its limits, was speedily organized. A missionary spirit was early manifested by this body. The spiritual destitution of their Rhode Island neighbors awakened



their concern and sympathy, and in March, 1722, "the reverend ministers of the gospel met in association at New London," prepared an address to the Governor, moving, "That a brief might be granted in several congregations, for gathering what such as should be so piously inclined would freely contribute towards supporting the charge of such reverend ministers as should be improved from this Colony to introduce and carry on the ministry of the gospel in the town of Providence." This address was presented by Governor Saltonstall to the Council, and having been read and considered, it was resolved that a brief for that end should be granted, and "directed to the respective ministers of the towns of New London, Norwich, Groton, Stonington, Preston, Lebanon, Windham, Mansfield, Canterbury, Plainfield, Pomfret and Killingly, or to the deacons of the churches in such towns where there is no minister; which shall direct such ministers and deacons to acquaint the congregation with the occasion of such collection to be made, and appoint a time after the performance of divine worship on the Lord's day to receive in the congregation what shall be contributed." The money thus collected was to be put in the hands of Mr. Whiting of Windham. The result of this early missionary effort is not recorded.

A meeting of the Association of New London County was held in Killingly, October 28, 1723, when it was voted:—

"Whereas, the late settlements that have been made of ministry in several towns and precincts in this county have made the members of this Association so numerous as to render it difficult for them all to meet in one place, it is, therefore, agreed upon by this Association, that the Association of this county be divided into two.

And that the bounds of the North Association of New London County be the south bounds of Voluntown, south bounds of north society in Preston and of the east and north societies of Norwich."

November 10, 1724, the North Association met at Preston. Mr. Eliphalet Adams of New London, was moderator. Salmon Treat, Samuel Estabrook, Joseph Coit, John Fisk, Ebenezer Williams, James Hershaw and Daniel Kirtland were present. It was agreed, "That the division made at Killingly be consented to and agreed upon, save that Mr. Lord of Preston belong to the South Association." In August, 1725, a meeting was held at Killingly, which agreed, "That there be three conventions in this Association, yearly—in May, August and October. Also, that any three ministers convened at the time were vested with full power to act." Eight rules were adopted at this meeting. The General Association of Connecticut, at their annual meeting this summer—doubtless in view of the great drouth and scarcity, Indian troubles and other "righteous providences"—had called upon the several County Associations, "to consider provoking

evils in the land." The ministers of the New London North Association considered the matter at their October session in Pomfret, and specified the following particulars:—

"Injustice, oppression and unfaithfulness in dealing, pride and intemperance, neglect of family religion in regard of instruction, worship and government, profanation of the Holy Sabbath, contempt of civil and sacred authority, neglect of divine institutions, such as omission of baptismal recognition and attending ye sacraments of ye Lord's Supper, and gospel maintenance of ye ministry of Christ."

After the erection of Windham County, the New London North was merged in the Windham County Association, comprising all the ministers within the county limits and one or two within New London County.



## BOOK II. 1726-46.

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### I.

WINDHAM COURTS CONSTITUTED. JAIL AND COURT-HOUSE  
ORDERED. AFFAIRS IN WINDHAM TOWN. OUTBREAKS.

**W**INDHAM, when made the shire town of the County taking her name, was the leading town of northeastern Connecticut. Though even then, with Mansfield, Coventry and Lebanon on the west and neither Woodstock nor Thompson on the north, she was southwest of the geographical centre of Windham County, no one thought of disputing her claim. In population, wealth, cultivation and political influence she had far outstripped her sister townships, and was at once recognized and received as their rightful head and leader.

The first Court of Common Pleas within and for the County of Windham was holden at Windham Green, June 26, 1726. Timothy Pierce of Plainfield, previously Judge of Probate, was appointed by the General Assembly, Judge of the County Court. Joshua Ripley of Windham, Thomas Huntington of Mansfield, Joseph Adams of Canterbury, and Ebenezer West of Lebanon appeared as Justices of the Quorum. Richard Abbe of Windham was appointed treasurer of the County. Eleazer Cary, Jonathan Crane, Joshua Ripley, Jun., Joseph Huntington, Thomas Root and Nathaniel Rust served as jurymen on this occasion. The first act of the Court was "to inquire into the circumstances" of the unfortunate Peter Davison of Mortlake, then under the charge of Justice Adams, in pursuance of a recommendation from the County Court of New London, "that this Court should make some provision for the further support and maintenance of said idiot." Joseph Backus of Norwich appeared as attorney for New London County. The Court was of opinion that it had "no power or authority to assign said idiot to any particular place or person for his future support." Forty six cases were tried at this first session of the County Court. Thomas Stevens of Plainfield, Sampson Howe and Isaac Cutler of Killingly, Solomon Tracy, Edward Spalding and Richard Pellet of



Canterbury, Francis Smith and Obadiah Rhodes of Voluntown, were licensed "to keep houses of public entertainment for strangers, travelers and others, and also to retail strong drink for y<sup>e</sup> ensuing year;" James Lassel of Windham, "to use and occupy y<sup>e</sup> art and mystery of tanning." At the December session, Samuel Backus was arraigned for speaking "vile, ungodly and profane language," and Joseph Bolles of New London, "for declaring to y<sup>e</sup> worshipful Judge Timothy Pierce, 'You fight against God and you are perverting wretches.'" Mehitable Morris, for unseemly conduct, was sentenced to pay ten pounds, or be whipped ten stripes upon her naked body.

August 18, 1726, the justices met in Windham, "to consult and take measures for building a county gaol and prison-house for y<sup>e</sup> use of the county." It was ordered, "That a gaol be built with all possible expedition, thirty-one foot long and eighteen foot in breadth. The gaol to be ten foot wide, built of logs all framed into posts, and be divided into two rooms by a board partition; one to have a small fire-place or chimney. The other end [of the building] to be for the prison house, to be built after y<sup>e</sup> manner of other ordinary framed buildings, having a chimney with the back nesen to y<sup>e</sup> gaol; ye [gaol] room to be six and a half foot between joints, and having a cellar under it, fourteen foot one way and twelve another." A rate of a half-penny a pound was ordered to be collected in each town for this building. It was also ordered, "That Mr. Richard Abbe's back-room in his dwelling-house shall be a common gaol till the new one be built."

In May, 1726, Jabez Huntington of Windham was appointed sheriff of Windham County—John Woodward and Richard Abbe binding themselves in a recognizance of two thousand pounds that he should be faithful in the administration of his office. Ebenezer Gray was chosen clerk of the Court. Josiah Conant of Mansfield was appointed surveyor of lands for the County.

In April, 1729, all the justices within Windham County met at the house of Richard Abbe, to "consider about building a state-house." Timothy Pierce, Joshua Ripley, Thomas Huntington, Joseph Adams, Ebenezer West, John Fitch, Joseph Strong and John Woodward were present. It was agreed, "to build a court-house, forty foot long, twenty-four foot wide, twenty foot between joyns; and, also, that those gentlemen who are deputies for the town of Windham shall, in the name of the County of Windham, prefer a memorial to the Hon. Assembly . . . praying their approbation in this affair, and, also, that something be granted to said county out of the duties of goods imported into this Government to assist them in building said house; also, that something be allowed them from the counties of Hartford and New London, in consideration of what we paid for building the

state-houses while we belonged to said counties ; also, that the town of Windham may be under the same regulations as to keeping and maintaining a grammar school in said town as the other head towns of other counties in this Colony."

In response to this request, the Assembly authorized and empowered the judge and justices of the county to assess polls and ratable estates in the several towns and parishes, for so much money as should be needful for the building, repairing and maintaining a sufficient Court-house, and to order the county treasurer to collect it. Hartford and New London were allowed to pay back what they should think reasonable. A rate of a penny a pound was accordingly assessed upon the inhabitants of the county. Richard Abbe, Jabez Huntington and Ebenezer Gray were appointed to have the care and management of building the court-house, as soon as conveniently may be. This was probably accomplished in 1730. The court-house stood on a corner of Windham Green, and was considered a handsome building for the time. It does not appear that Hartford or New London thought it reasonable to pay *anything* towards its erection.

Captain John Sabin, the first settler of Pomfret and leading citizen of northeastern Connecticut, was appointed by the Assembly, October, 1726, major of the regiment in the County of Windham. Upon the petition of several persons, the Assembly ordered Major Sabin, a year later, "to raise a troop in the County of Windham, and to enroll such suitable persons as will voluntarily enlist themselves and engage to equip themselves well for that service ; and if there appear and enlist to the number of fifty persons, the major then lead them to the choice of all proper officers." The requisite number appearing, the troop was organized in May following, with Joseph Trumbull for captain, Jabez Huntington, lieutenant, Ebenezer Metcalf, cornet, and Thomas Newcomb, quarter-master.

Windham County, at the date of its formation, included twelve organized ecclesiastic societies, with the following churches and ministers :—

Windham (1st), Thomas Clap, pastor.  
 Windham (2d), William Billings, pastor.  
 Lebanon (1st), Solomon Williams, pastor.  
 Lebanon (2d) or Crank, William Gager, pastor.  
 Coventry, Joseph Meachem, pastor.  
 Mansfield, Eleazer Williams, pastor.  
 Voluntown, Samuel Dorrance, pastor.  
 Plainfield, Joseph Coit, pastor.  
 Canterbury, Samuel Estabrook, pastor.  
 Ashford, James Hale, Pastor.  
 Pomfret, Ebenezer Williams, pastor.  
 Killingly, John Fisk, pastor.

These twelve churches, according to the law of the Colony, formed

The Windham County Consociation, the pastors and representatives of each church meeting together in council whenever requisite, to settle cases of scandal and discipline. The Windham County Association of ministers held its first meeting in Lebanon, September 6, 1726. The Rev. Messrs. Estabrook, Fisk, Ebenezer, Eleazer and Solomon Williams, Billings, Gager and Clap were present. "Voted, That the rules made for the North Association of New London County should remain the rules, with the addendum that the moderator, scribes and delegates should be chosen by written votes."

The new dignity conferred upon the town of Windham gave it immediate impetus. The growth of the village at Windham Green was especially quickened. The court-house and gaol were soon erected, with stores, taverns and numerous private residences. Richard Abbe, now one of Windham's leading citizens, constable, justice, county treasurer and often representative, opened his stately mansion for public entertainment, receiving license in 1727. Joshua Ripley and John Fitch were still in active life. Much business and trade now centred in Windham Green. Nehemiah Ripley and Joseph Genning, haying obtained the art of tanning leather and "followed the trade, so that the people had a better supply of shoes, which is a public benefit," received permission to set their tan vats on the waste land or highway below Broughton's spring. Thomas Snell also had liberty to set a blacksmith's shop, eleven feet by thirty, in the highway, north side of Ebenezer Ginnings' house-lot. The grammar school authorized by General Court, was established after some delay. Windham, always remiss in school matters, instructed her deputies, "to ask a grant of land in Voluntown" for its support, but received no help from that quarter.

Throughout the town, improvements were in progress. Ichabod Warner was allowed, in 1727, to make a dam across Pigeon Swamp Brook; John Marcy and Seth Palmer to make one on Merriek's Brook. The first dam was built across the Willimantic the same year, near the site of the present stone dam of the Linen Company. The Iron Works' Bridge was also erected. The forge and iron works were now in operation, but not particularly successful, if we may judge by the frequent change of owners. Badger soon sold his share to Ebenezer Hartshorn, son of Thomas, the first Willimantic mill-owner. Hartshorn conveyed it to Joshua Ripley and he to Thomas Dyer, together with the adjacent dwelling-house, May 27, 1731. Dyer retained it till 1735, and then sold out to Hathaway, one of the founders of the company. These Willimantic Iron Works were maintained many years, and employed a number of laborers, but were never very thriving. The privilege occupied so early by Thomas Hartshorn

was made over by him to his son Ebenezer, of Charlestown, who, "because he could not come to Windham to reside with any manner of convenience," sold grist-mill and sawmill, water privilege and forty-acre lot to Joseph Martin of Lebanon for £410, in 1729. Thomas Harts-horn, the first settler of Willimantic, then purchased a house of Ebenezer Jennings, and removed to Windham Centre. An early settler in this vicinity, not previously recorded, was Stephen, son of the Captain John Brown, who received a thousand-acre-right from Captain Samuel Mason in 1677. The home-lot pertaining to this right was laid out in 1706, abutting southeast on Willimantic River, near the northern boundary of the town, and was improved and occupied prior to 1720, by Stephen Brown.

The prosperity of the church in Windham during this period exceeded that of the town. Mr. Clap developed remarkable administrative capacities, and brought all ecclesiastical affairs under stringent laws and discipline. Great pains were taken to enlarge the membership of the church. As many church members were found in town who wished to share in church privileges, but had brought no letters from the churches to which they belonged, it was ordered:—

"1. That all persons who have been inhabitants more than three years, attended upon the ordinances and behaved themselves soberly—shall be accounted fixed members of this church, though they have brought no letter.

2. That all persons who have come and dwelt within three years shall procure a recommendation in three months.

3. That for the future, all persons coming hither shall bring a recommendation in three months.

4. Failing to do it shall be deemed utter negligence, or that they were under some scandal, and such shall be suspended from the communion unless distance prevents or some sufficient excuse."

To such baptized persons as were not members of the church, the duty of "owning the covenant" was now strictly enjoined. Great pains were taken with this class and privileges allowed them. A previous vote had made them subjects of discipline. In 1728, it was further voted, "That all baptismal persons have a right to hear confessions for public scandal, and that no such confessions shall be accepted unless made before the congregation on the Sabbath, or some public meeting wherein all baptized persons have warning to attend."

These confessions were very frequent. The number of delinquents arraigned under the strict regimen of Mr. Clap was very large. So severe was the task of sifting and collating evidence that he was compelled to ask assistance. The "Representatives of the brethren of the church," instituted to consult with the pastor on all emergent occasions, were transformed into a special committee of inquiry, November 13, 1728, by the following enactment:—

"Whereas, the work and business of the pastor of a church is very great,



and particularly the enquiring into scandal and procuring evidence, and, whereas, the Scripture informs us that God has set some in the church to be helps in the government—voted, ‘That it shall be the work of the Representatives of the Brethren, and they are hereby desired, with all diligence, to attend upon it. That when there is a public and common report that any person belonging to the congregation hath committed any public and scandalous evil, to inquire into such report and bring information and evidence to the pastor—provided that this be not understood to hinder the pastor from taking cognizance of any scandal that may otherwise clearly come to his knowledge, nor to hinder any private brother from bringing a complaint whenever there be occasion for it.’”

Ralph Wheelock and Samuel Manning were then added to the previous Representatives—Joshua Ripley, John Fitch and Jonathan Crane.

Under this energetic discipline, the church in Windham was greatly enlarged and strengthened. Mr. Clap was by no means satisfied with outward decorum and conformity to law, but labored earnestly to promote the growth and raise the standard of piety. At least once in every year he visited every family in his parish and catechized the children, “noting the name and age of each member, that so he might have more knowledge and clear remembrance of every soul committed to his care and charge, and the circumstances and condition of each particular person.” Though not “brilliant or eloquent,” he was a forcible preacher, and greatly impressed the community by his earnestness and strength of character. Mr. Clap was married November 23, 1727, to Mary Whiting, the daughter of his predecessor. Though not fifteen years of age at the time of her marriage, she was already remarkable for loveliness of person and disposition, and by her winning sweetness and amiability softened the asperities of her somewhat arbitrary husband. She proved fully equal to her position, and greatly endeared herself to the church and people.

With all the pains taken to ensure good order and discipline—Colony and church laws, inquisitorial committee and local town enactments—Windham did not escape occasional outbreaks of rowdyism. Samuel Backus, though punished by imprisonment and hard labor for speaking “vile, ungodly and profane language” as before related, had the temerity, in 1730, to join with two other lads—William Backus, Jun., and Joshua Sawyer—steal the keys of the gaol and let out certain prisoners, who effected their escape from justice. For this high-handed offence, Backus was bound over as apprentice or servant for three years to Mr. Zedediah Strong. Sawyer, for a less period, to John Arnold of Mansfield. A number of Windham citizens were concerned, a few years earlier, in a much more serious affair—the breaking open of Hartford Jail and release of Captain Jeremiah Fitch, and when the grand-jurors of the town attempted to arrest some of these rioters, Captain Fitch himself, William More and about twenty

men came out upon them with great clubs or stakes, threatened, pursued, struck some of the company and threw stones and clubs at them. Presentment of this affray was sent to Mr. Justice Ripley, with direction to proceed against the actors as the law required, who returned that he could not take them without a deputy sheriff, and that "the said sheriff could not come into these parts, much more attempt to seize them, without danger of his life or having his bones broken." In 1733, Jeremiah Ripley, Jun., was guilty of the grave misdemeanor of declaring, at the Windham Court-house before a great number of freemen, met to give in their votes for the election of the governor and other officers, "That the Honorable Governor was a fool, and his friend and counsellor, Roger Wolcott, a knave, and that we will kick about the knave and turn out the fool." These reproachful and contemptuous words being duly reported to the General Assembly, Mr. Ripley was apprehended and brought before it to answer the misdemeanor, and upon his confessing himself in great measure guilty thereof, it was resolved, "That the said Jeremiah Ripley shall be disfranchised during the pleasure of the Assembly, and until they shall see cause to restore him to freedom again, and that he give bonds to the treasurer of this Colony to the value of £1,000, money, conditioned that he carry good behavior towards his Honor the Governor and Roger Wolcott, and all other his Majesty's subjects, for the space of one year next coming, and pay the cost of his prosecution, and stand committed till the same be performed." At the close of the year, he was discharged from bonds and restored to his rights and privileges as a freeman of the corporation.

## II.

THIRD SOCIETY SET OFF. SCOTLAND PARISH. MEETING-HOUSE  
BUILT. CHURCH ORGANIZED. MINISTER SETTLED.

THE southeast section of Windham participated in the growth and prosperity of the mother township. These Scotland settlers had early taken a high position in town, and were actively concerned in all its church and secular affairs, repairing constantly to the Green for trainings, town-meetings and the various religious services. The Windham people greatly valued their Scotland neighbors, and were anxious to retain them within their church and parish. At the first, symptom of a tendency to disruption—February, 1726—the town voted, "That when the public list amounted to £12,000, they would build a meeting-house in the east part, and when they should agree to

settle a minister the town would go unitedly—Canada or Windham parish excepted—in supporting two ministers and repairing two meeting-houses.” Notwithstanding this flattering eagerness to propitiate and retain them, the Scotland people soon manifested a preference for independence. In December, 1727, “divers of the inhabitants living east of first society,” received liberty to employ “a suitable person to preach to them in the winter season.” This service was continued several successive winters, Windham kindly granting leave “to hire a minister, provided they pay him and their just charges in Windham too.” It not appearing “just” to the Scotland residents to pay for two ministers, agitation was kept up till 1731, when a petition was preferred to the General Assembly for society privileges. Ebenezer West and John Woodward of Lebanon and Joseph Strong of Coventry, were thereupon “authorized to repair to said society and there to inquire into their circumstances; and if they judge (all things considered) that there ought to be a new society set off on the east part, that then they state and affix a dividend line, to run across said society north and south.” This committee reported in favor of division, and affixed a line, “beginning at the mouth of Merrick’s Brook, where it empties itself into Shetucket River, and so running northerly to the southwest corner of the land of John Kingsley, where he now dwells;” thence to Beaver Brook at John Fitch’s dam; thence, a straight line to Merrick’s Brook at a place crossed by the road from Windham’s first society to the Burnt Cedar Swamp; then, running south on the brook to the southwest corner of Canada Society; thence, easterly by the south bound of that society to Canterbury; thence south by Canterbury line to the dividend line between Windham and Norwich, and west by Norwich line to the mouth of Merrick’s Brook. This bound included, probably, less than a third of the territory of Windham. In October, 1731, Nathaniel Bingham, Jacob Burnap, Eleazer and Samuel Palmer, Joshua Luce, Daniel Meacham, Isaac Bingham, Samuel Hebard, Seth Palmer, Timothy Allen, Charles Mudie, Benj. Case, John Waldo, David Ripley, Caleb Woodward, John Cary, Jonathan Silsby, Elisha Lilly, Jacob Lilly, Joshua Lasell, Nathaniel Huntington, Nathaniel Brewster, Nathaniel Rudd, Wilkinson, Carpenter and Samuel Cook asked for confirmation of these bounds and distinct society privileges.

As usual, at this period, these were not obtained without a struggle. Peter Robinson, John Kingsley and other leading men were opposed to division, and thus stated their reasons, October 12, 1731:—

“I. That we are about eight miles by six, all our highways laid out leading to our present meeting-house, and whatever alteration will be made will be very chargeable to the society and prejudicial to particular persons, as the best that can be thought of for the greater part of this proposed new society is to go upon sufferance through a multitude of gates and bars, that will

render our passage to and from the public worship of God well nigh, if not altogether, as tedious as now it is.

II. As to our ability, we are humbly of opinion that, considering the smallness of our list and the great number of heads that make the best half of it, together with the unprofitableness of our land that still remains uncultivated, which renders it highly necessary for us to be at great charge in subduing it without expecting any great profit for some considerable time, that in our apprehension renders us incapable of division for some time.

III. As to our inclination to divide, we have had considerable debate thereon, and find that well nigh if not altogether half—taking in the neuters—are very averse to dividing, and we are much afraid it will promote a great deal of strife and contention among us if your Honors do not interfere and prevent any further proceedings until we are better able :

Peter Robinson.	Joseph Ford.	Benjamin Armstrong.
John Bass.	Daniel Ross.	Isaac Armstrong.
John Kingsley.	John Gray.	John Broughton.
Nathaniel Ford.	Thomas Armstrong.	Widow Sarah Hebard."

This remonstrance delayed action till the following May, when both parties again presented petitions. Discussion had been very earnest during the winter, and some of the "neuters" now came out in favor of the new society, and begged "to have their names changed from the opposing memorial to the one asking division." Opponents of the measure declared the advantages small compared with the expense, that the cost of settling a minister and building a meeting-house would be not less than a thousand pounds, while their part in enlarging the present house would not be above forty pounds, that their list of property was so small that it seemed more like starving the gospel than promoting it, that more than one-third of the inhabitants opposed division, and begged not to be constrained to it. The inhabitants of the western part of Windham also remonstrated against the proposed division. Captain John Fitch declared :—

"That the committee had set off the new division about a third bigger than the residue thought they could possibly spare, yet many wanted a considerable part more; had not seen the allegations, but supposed the families were so numerous, and their indigency equivalent thereto, as to render them incapable of transporting them to meeting, but how much of an argument there might be in shortening the travel and enhancing the charge they might decide. Windham had already lost Mansfield and Canada, which rendered it very difficult for them to accommodate the memorialists. Attempt at division had caused great strife and divided the people into three parties, not quite so equal in their distribution as in their temper and disposition, which will prove very detrimental and you will see them better agreed if you proceed no further in the affair."

In spite of these remonstrances, the majority carried the day, and the east part of Windham was endowed with society privileges, May, 1732. The bounds ascribed were those recommended by the committee. The number of families within them was about eighty; list of estates reported, £3,945. The first society meeting was held June 22, 1732, at the house of Nathaniel Huntington. Richard Abbe presided. Edward Waldo was chosen moderator; John Manning, clerk; Peter Robinson, John and Edward Waldo, society committee. September



20, the society again met at Mr. Huntington's, and "Voted, to have a minister for the month, and that the place of preaching be at the house of Nathaniel Huntington. Also, that we desire to set our meeting-house in the centre of our society, and if that prove to be an inconvenience in the next most convenient place, to build a meeting-house for the public worship of God. Also, Ensign Nathaniel Rudd, Mr. Samuel Manning, Lieutenant Peter Robinson, Sergeants Nathaniel Bingham and Edward Waldo, Mr. John Bass and Mr. John Cary, be a committee to provide us a minister to preach to us, and also to provide a place for him to diet in, and also to agree with him for what he shall have a day."

Mr. Flagg was the minister provided—diet-place and daily wages not recorded. December 25, a society meeting was held at Mr. John Waldo's. The dissensions arising during the discussions preceding division were not yet healed, and now broke out with renewed violence. Some thought that by the law of the Colony societies were required to elect their officers in December, others, that all chosen must serve a year. A majority favored the former opinion, and proceeded to appoint Lieutenant Nathaniel Huntington, clerk and collector; Peter Robinson, John Bass and David Ripley, committee—whereupon Messrs. Manning, Rudd, Bingham, Cary and Allen, at once ordered the clerk, "to enter their dissent against these proceedings of the meeting, for that it was not the work of the day and was not contained within the warning, and that the officers chosen in June were expected to serve a year." Much confusion followed, and the meeting was adjourned till December 29, at the house of David Ripley. The "difference" still continued. Attempts were made to quiet parties by adding two of the former committee to the present, but it had not that effect. A number were persuaded that the proceedings of the society were irregular, and that they were destitute of a lawful clerk and committee, and thus no business could be accomplished "without quarreling." They succeeded in appointing Joseph Meachem, John Cary and Jeremiah Ripley for school committee. Samuel Bingham, Zebulon Webb and Peter Robinson were also employed "to provide a minister to preach to us for the space of two months," and nothing else effected during the winter. In the spring, both parties repaired to the Assembly with their grievances and difficulties, which were relieved by the enactment, "That the committee and other officers chosen December 25, should be good and valid in law."

At the same session, their meeting-house spot was confirmed to them. By the Colony law enacted May, 1731, inhabitants were to apply to the Assembly, who were to appoint, order and affix the place whereon each meeting-house should be built. Parishioners were to

appoint a committee, grant and levy a tax; clerk of society to keep account of disbursements and certify to the Assembly the doings of the society and progress of the house. For a society to build without referring to the Assembly was not lawful, and subjected them to £100 penalty. In compliance with this act, the lawful authorities judged the most proper place for Scotland meeting-house to be "a knoll, east side of Merriek's Brook, south side of the road from Windham to Canterbury." This land was included in a thirty-acre lot owned by Mr. Nathaniel Huntington, who promptly made over a quarter of an acre for a building-spot—a gift "thankfully received" by the young society. This important point being settled, all minor differences were laid aside, and all parties united harmoniously in promoting the work of building. June 25, 1733, it was voted, "To build a house forty-three foot in length, thirty-three foot in width, twenty foot stud, with a handsome jeyht to it suitable for such a house." Edward Waldo, John Bass and Joseph Meachem were appointed a committee "to agree with suitable men to build the house, so far as to finish the outside—glazing excepted—make all the doors, and lay the under-floor dubble." It was agreed, "That the roof shall be covered with chestnut shingles and chestnut clap-boards, sawed." Notices for society meetings were ordered "to be written on a peace of paper, to be sett at the tavern, by the door, so as fairly to be seen, and also at the corn-mill." October 2, Samuel Palmer, Samuel Manning, Peter Robinson and John Bass were appointed, "To take care of the provision and drink brought in for the raising of the meeting-house. The raising was accomplished and the frame covered so speedily that, November 20, a society meeting was held in the meeting-house. It was voted, "That the society accept of the said house, as in their estimation done as said committee was to do it." A committee was now chosen to agree with some man or men to glaze the meeting-house with good crown glass, and Mr. Seth Palmer employed to make some conveniency for a minister to stand by to preach. With this temporary pulpit, costing ten shillings, and rough boards for seats, the house was deemed ready for occupation, and twelve shillings allowed to David Ripley for keeping it swept.

Efforts were now made to secure a permanent minister. February 7, 1734, the society voted, "That we give a minister a call by *dividing* in said house. The minister thus selected was Mr. Robert Breck, a young minister of much ability and promise, in whom the society now united, offering £250 for settlement. This arrangement was frustrated by the interference of Mr. Clap, who still exercised ministerial authority over the new parish, and suspected the soundness of Mr. Breck's orthodoxy. He told the Scotland people that their chosen

candidate was inclined to Arminianism, and that they must have no more to do with him, and advised Mr. Breck to leave, which he did at once, without apparent demur or remonstrance. The dictum of Mr. Clap was not to be questioned. March 27, another meeting was held, and Isaac Burnap, David Ripley and Edward Waldo chosen "a ministerial committee to provide us a minister," and directed, "To go first to Mr. Barber to get him to preach, and if he fails to the Erector of New Haven. By the advice of this important personage, Mr. William Hart was secured, and received with favor. July 18, was set apart as a day of special fasting and prayer, before proceeding again to call a minister. The Rev. Eleazer Williams conducted the services, and Mr. Hart was called with due formality, but declining to accept, the society was constrained to appoint another committee, "to get us a minister."

During this interval, the meeting-house was progressing. In May, arrangements were made for building pulpit, deacons' seat and canopy, a gallery with stairs and pillars, and a body of seats. It was voted, "to joyne the body of seats of the men's and women's in the midst, and also that we leave seven feet of room round the sides and ends of the house for alleys and pews; eight feet on the back for pulpit and deacons' seat—John Bass, Nathaniel Rudd and Samuel Cook to see it done." In August, it was decided, "To change the middle of the body of seats, and have an alley from the door to the deacons' seat, three and a half feet wide, and the seats to come up to the south side of the house, raising the hind-seat two steps and the next to that, one." This proving unsatisfactory, in October, it was determined "to new-model our meeting-house," but no particulars specified. December 17, 1734, John Manning was chosen society clerk; John Bass, David Ripley and Nathaniel Rudd, committee; Seth Palmer and Elijah Hurlbut, collectors; John Bass, treasurer; David Ripley, Isaac Burnap and Thomas Bass, school committee.

January 21, 1735, a special committee was appointed, to serve for three months, "to get a minister in order for settlement," and, happily, succeeded. The minister secured after so much pains and labor was Ebenezer, son of Rev. Ebenezer Devotion of Suffield—a young man of good abilities, pleasing address and unimpeachable orthodoxy—who had just completed his ministerial studies. He was graduated from Yale College, in 1732, and just twenty-one years old when called to the Scotland pastorate. £300 settlement and £140 salary were offered him, with an additional thirty afterward, "he finding his own fire-wood." August 9, Mr. Devotion personally appeared before the society and accepted their terms. Preparations were promptly made for ordination. Edward Waldo, Isaac Burnap and Nath. Bingham were appointed

to make provision for the elders and messengers; Samuel Manning, Samuel Palmer and Peter Robinson to send for them. Oct. 22, 1735, a church was organized in the third society of Windham, and Mr. Devotion <sup>†</sup> ordained its pastor. The first and second churches of Windham, the second church of Pomfret, the churches of Mansfield, Lisbon and Canterbury were represented in the Council. Mr. Clap served as scribe. The brethren of the Windham church residing in Scotland Parish "appeared before the Council, and by a manual vote declared their consent and agreement to be a particular church by themselves, for the attendance upon and carrying on all the ordinances of the gospel in this place." Eighty-nine members were dismissed from the first and incorporated into the third church of Windham. Mr. Devotion was then ordained with the usual formalities. November 19, Edward Waldo and Nathaniel Bingham were chosen deacons.

After the happy settlement of an acceptable pastor, Scotland pursued its way for many years with great peace and harmony. A "reading and wrighting school, two months a-piece, in the upper and lower parts of the society," was established. The meeting-house slowly attained completion. In 1737, a pew was ordered for Mr. Devotion, "in the east side the pulpit, joining the pulpit, for his youce so long as he shall continue with us in the work of the ministry." In the following year, it was voted to finish the meeting-house, "i. e., lay the gallery floor, finish the breast-work and build the first and second seats around it." In 1739, pews were erected. Twelve young men received liberty to build a pew the length of the front gallery, dividing the same by a partition of wood, taking one-half as their own proper seat to sit in and gallantly allowing the other to a certain number of young women. In 1740, Nathaniel Rudd, David Ripley, Nathaniel Huntington and Deacons Waldo and Bingham, had leave to build a pew, west end of the pulpit, next the stairs, for themselves and their wives. During this year, it was first voted, "To seat the meeting-house," John Bass, Jonathan Silsbee, Jonathan Brewster, Nath. Huntington and John Cary, serving as committee. Bass, Silsbee and Brewster were assigned the fore-seat in the body of seats below; Seth Palmer, the second seat next to the fore-seat. The "numerous" children in the early Scotland families necessitated continued seat-building. Pews were built in company, and only occupied by heads of families, so that the young people as they grew up were forced to provide for themselves. In 1741, Elizabeth Palmer, Jail Lassell, Welthe Cost, Lucy Carpenter, Phebe and Elizabeth Lillie, Elizabeth and Sarah Skiff, Ann Ripley and Abigail Huntington, had liberty to build a pew in the gallery. October 28, 1747, Jabez Kingsley, Samuel Robinson, John Bass,



Pelathiel Durham and James and Phineas Manning, thus petitioned :—

“ We, the subscribers, petition the third society of Windham to grant us liberty of ye floor in ye second seat of ye first gallery on the men’s side, to be devoted to our own use to sit in. We desire liberty to raise the floor so much as to make it leavel, and to make a door and to set up bauisters, and we will do it at our own cost and charge.”

This request was granted, on condition “ that they pay the society for finishing the meeting-house against their pew, and let those that sit in the northeast corner pew have free liberty to pass and repass through their pew, and build in six months.”

Even very young girls were stimulated to join in this pew-building, as shown by this memorial :—

“ *November 26, 1744.* The humble prayer of your dutiful memorialists sheweth to this society, that we, having unconvenient seats in our meeting-house in said society to sit in, we therefore pray our Fathers of said society to give us the liberty to build a pew in the east gallery, at our own cost and charge. Hoping our petition will not be denied, we subscribe ourselves your dutiful children till death :

Mary Mosely.  
Abigail Palmer.

Mary Wright.  
Elizabeth Kingsley.

Mehitable Huntington.”

### III.

#### CANADA PARISH. DEATH OF MR. BILLINGS. CHANGES IN FIRST SOCIETY. FIRST EXECUTION IN WINDHAM COUNTY.

THE second society of Windham, having outlived the trials of its infancy, was now thriving and populous, many families having settled in Windham Village and the adjacent valleys. Thomas Marsh, Benjamin Chaplin and Samuel Kimbal of the south part of Pomfret, were annexed to this society. A new road, laid out from Windham Village to Pomfret in 1730, facilitated communication between these settlements. Thomas Stedman of Brookline purchased a hundred and fifty acres of Nathaniel Kingsbury, and settled in Windham Village in 1732. Ebenezer Griffin of Newton, the following year, settled a mile northwest of the meeting-house, on land bought of William Durkee, marrying Hannah, daughter of Deacon Philemon Chandler of Pomfret. A full military company was formed in 1730, with Nathaniel Kingsbury for captain and James Utley for lieutenant. The chief house of entertainment was now kept by Nathaniel Hovey ; the first store is believed to have been kept by Benjamin Bidlack. Of schools and the general progress of the society, nothing can be learned in the absence of society records.

The church in Canada Parish was in the main prosperous, though greatly burthened with questions of discipline. Little is known of

Mr. Billings, or of his standing and success in the ministry, but it is evident that affairs were not entirely harmonious. In 1727, Mr. Billings applied to the Windham County Association for advice in accommodating differences in the church of Windham Village, and was recommended a mediation of ministers or a council of consociation. A contemptuous fling at the preaching attributed to one of the brethren occasioned further disturbance. The offender refused to make proper acknowledgment. Mr. Billings, as strict in discipline as his cotemporary in old Windham, again applied to the Association, September 11, 1729. A committee was sent, which prescribed the following confession:—

“I acknowledge before God and this church y<sup>t</sup> my saying, ‘I had rather hear my dog bark than Mr. Billings preach,’ was a vile and scandalous expression, tending to ye dishonor of our Lord Jesus Christ and his ambassadors, as also of religion in general. I do hereby declare before God and ye church my sorrow and repentance for it, humbly asking your forgiveness, and resolve to have a greater watch and guard over my tongue.”

This confession was probably satisfactory to neither party, as, two years later, the Association voted, “That Mr. Billings ought to accept confession,” and in August, 1732, ordered, “That Mr. Billings do proceed to read aloud ——’s confession with all convenient speed.” The matter was not settled till 1735, after the death of Mr. Billings, when the offender appeared before the congregation, owned the prescribed confession, and the church accepted it.

Indulgence in liquor involved another brother in a course of church discipline.

“*January 8, 1731.* Rev. William Billings to —— . Greeting:—

Having been informed of your being over-taken with inebriating drink at sundry times of late, to ye great dishonor of Christ and religion, and danger of your own soul, you are required to come to my house and do what the laws of Christ’s Kingdom require of such offenders.”

This being disregarded, a second summons was sent, January 23, enforcing his appearance, or he “would add obstinacy to his former crime.” The culprit then appeared, but denied the accusation. Farther investigation was decided upon. Elizabeth Crocker, Daniel Davis, John Clark, Mr. and Mrs. Nathaniel Hovey, William Durkee and Stephen Fuller, were summoned to give in their testimony. A formal meeting was held at the minister’s, February 9, and the fact established that the accused had been overcome and disguised with strong drink; once when working on the highway, and again at the houses of Nathaniel Hovey and Benjamin Bidlack. A public confession was ordered. The young man demurred, and begged time to consider the matter, but finally, March 28, 1731, came to the house of God and owned the following declaration, read by the pastor:—

“These are to confess that I have been overtaken some time since with strong drink, and particularly at the last day of working on highway last fall. I acknowledge I then drank too much strong drink, and have sinned before ye

Great Lord, and I have a jealousy of myself, whether I have not been overtaken or drunk too much strong drink some other times, for all which I desire to be deeply humbled, and take shame to myself, and to pray a pardon from the Great Lord the Christ, and ask forgiveness of the Church, hoping and resolving, in the strength of Christ, to walk more watchfully for time to come."

From these older church members—Hovey and Bidlack—who had probably furnished the liquor thus "overtaken" and "overtaking," no confession was extorted. A brother, "guilty of railing and defamatory language," was also required to make a public confession. Elizabeth Mott, having "embraced anti-Pædo-baptistical sentiments to a high degree and denied them to be a true church," was "shaken off and given up," November, 1730.

An acute disease terminated the life and ministry of Mr. Billings, May 20, 1733. One hundred and seventy-two persons had been admitted to his church during his ten years pastorate. A sermon, preached on the preceding Fast-day, was published after his decease, and gives, says Mr. Robert C. Learned, "a pleasing impression of his mental and moral qualities." The Rev. Mr. Hale of Ashford, thus testifies in the preface to this sermon: "I have discerned his sweet Christian conversation, not only among the ministers in our Association meetings, but also in some measure amongst his own people, and also very particularly in his own family, wherein he practiced in a very eminent degree and manner. In his last sickness, he gave tokens of finishing his course in a right Christian manner, though sorely oppressed with the distemper in the last week, even unto his being very delirious." Mr. Billings left a widow and four young children. His estate, though less than those of Messrs. Whiting and Estabrook, was not insufficient, as is evident from this inventory:—

	£	s.	d.
Clothes, . . . . .	24	4	2
Books, . . . . .	48	10	7
Horse, . . . . .	22	0	0
Stock, . . . . .	42	0	0
Furniture, . . . . .	20	0	0
Cloth, yarn and flax, . . . . .	20	0	0
Brass, . . . . .	7	0	0
Pewter, . . . . .	8	7	0
Iron, . . . . .	10	4	0
Bedding, . . . . .	51	10	0
Indian girl, . . . . .	20	0	0
Farm and house, . . . . .	600	0	0

Nine pounds for provisions were allowed to the widow during the settlement of the estate. In July, 1734, she represented to the Court that she was destitute of provisions—not enough for one week—and very scant for clothing, with four small children and not able to do anything for their support, under the afflicting hand of Providence by sickness and exposed to great difficulty, and begged to have the money due for her husband's salary allowed her, which was granted. She

soon after married, as was not infrequent in those days, her husband's successor in the ministry—Samuel Mosely of Dochester, the first candidate recommended by the Association. Mr. Mosely was graduated from Harvard College, in 1729, and ordained pastor of the second church in Windham, May 15, 1734. No record is preserved of the services of the day or terms of settlement. Mr. Mosely was an able and earnest preacher, dignified in manner and strict in doctrine and discipline. In 1738, a number of brethren were chosen "to represent the church, with full power to draw up judgment and administer censure in matters of church discipline with the pastor," and it was ordered, "That a judgment drawn up at any time by this representative body should be publicly read before the church and congregation before they proceeded any further in a way of censure with the offender, and that satisfaction should be made by the offender in the same public manner." Deacons John and William Durkee and Thomas Marsh, Captain James Utley, Thomas Stedman, Philip Abbot, Eleazer Crocker, George Martin, John Clark, Thomas Kingsbury, Samuel Kingsbury and Benjamin Chaplin, were chosen to this office. April 25, 1739, these powers were confirmed, and it was voted, "That the representatives before spoken of should continue in the office of ruling elders during the pleasure of the church." At the same meeting, the church also voted:—

"That 'tis the opinion of this church, that liberty of an appeal from the judgment of the Consociation to a Synod consisting of two or three ministers and as many messengers out of each county, properly chosen, all with equal power to vote in said Synod . . . is reasonable and convenient, and would have a tendency to promote the peace, purity and edification of our churches if they should introduce it into practice."

Though an active member of Windham County Association, Mr. Mosely was not at this time in sympathy with the ecclesiastic constitution of Connecticut, as is manifest from this attempt to evade the power of Consociation.

The first society of Windham was now suffering many losses. Mary, the lovely wife of Mr. Clap, died August 19, 1736, before completing her twenty-fourth year. Few women have excelled this young daughter of Windham. More than thirty years after her death, Dr. Daggett thus sketches her character:—

"She had a beautiful and pleasant countenance; was a woman of great prudence and discretion in the conduct of herself and all her affairs; was diligent, and always endeavored to make the best of what she had; the heart of her husband could safely trust in her. She was kind and compassionate to the poor and all in distress. She was adorned with an excellent spirit of humility and meekness; did not affect to put herself forward in conversation, but chose to speak discreetly rather than much, but was always free,



pleasant and cheerful in conversation with every one. She exceeded in a most serene, pleasant temper and disposition of mind, which rendered her very agreeable to her husband and all her acquaintance; and though he lived with her almost nine years in the connubial state, yet he never once saw her in any unpleasant temper, neither did one unpleasant word pass between them on any occasion whatsoever."

So little is seen of women in the early days of Windham County history that it is pleasant to find so bright a model among them. Mrs. Clap left two young daughters, who lived to maturity, and adorned high positions in Connecticut.

Richard Abbe, the most prominent of the second generation of Windham citizens, died July 10, 1737, aged fifty-four. Half of his large estate, with the negro girl, Ginne, was bequeathed to his wife, and liberal legacies given to his brothers and sisters. He also left fifty pounds to Mr. Clap and twenty to the first church of Windham. He especially enjoined upon his executors "that no unjust advantage should be taken of his debtors, and that those against whom he held mortgages should have reasonable time to redeem them, even if they had been legally forfeited." He had been constable, sheriff, justice of peace, judge of the County Court, and a man of influence in town, church and Colony.

Jeremiah Ripley, Sen., and his son, Jeremiah, both died in 1737. Joshua Ripley, Sen., after fifty years of active public service, died in 1739. His wife, Mrs. Ann Bradford Ripley, had preceded him a few years. He left sons—Joshua, Hezekiah and David—and one daughter. The greater part of his estate had been previously distributed among his children. Joshua, now, received his great Bible and wearing apparel—except such as he was buried in. Jerusha, for her care of him, had a cow and heifer above her proportion. A grand-daughter, Ann, one heifer, as designed by her grandmother. The flock of sheep was divided among the sons. Eight or nine religious books, and many sermons, composed his library. Much of the household furniture was "old" and "broken." A china platter was the most costly article. Eight "rugs," or coverlids, blue, yellow, orange and white, valued at over eight pounds, bore witness to the thrift and ingenuity of Mrs. Ripley.

Mr. John Backus, the last of the original settlers, died March 27, 1744, in the eighty-third year of his age, having "served his generation in a steady course of probity and piety." One of his daughters had married Joshua Ripley, Jun.; another, Colonel Thomas Dyer; another, Hezekiah Lord of Preston; and all were women of superior energy and character.

Mr. Nathaniel Wales, chosen one of the deacons of the church at its organization in 1700, "after he had served God and his generation

faithfully many years in this life, did with the holy disciple lean upon the breast of his beloved, and by the will of God meekly fell asleep in the cradle of death on the 22d day of June, 1744, in the 85th year of his age."

He was followed in May, 1745, by Captain John Fitch, the last survivor of the fathers and founders of Windham. For more than forty years he had held the office of town-clerk, was chosen captain of its first military company in 1703, and served as representative, justice, judge of probate, and in many public capacities.

To these losses, was added the removal of Mr. Clap. After the death of his wife, he had devoted himself with redoubled earnestness to his pastoral work, bearing the name and circumstances of every one upon his heart, and endeavoring in every possible way to forward and promote the salvation of their souls—till called to the presidency of Yale College. Many prominent clergymen and public men of Connecticut, confident of his peculiar fitness, urged his acceptance of this office, and Windham was reluctantly compelled to resign her energetic and distinguished pastor. December 10, 1739, he was dismissed from his pastorate, and April 2, 1740, installed president of Yale College. A pecuniary compensation for the loss sustained by Windham was referred "to the judgment of the gentlemen of the General Assembly," who "considering that Rev. Mr. Clap had been in the ministry at Windham fourteen years, which, in their estimate, was about half the time of a minister's life in general, judged that the society ought to have half the price of his settlement." This was about fifty-three pounds sterling—or three hundred and ten pounds in the depreciated currency of Connecticut. August 20, 1740, the First Society in Windham voted, "That Mr. John Abbe, Nathan Skiff and Joseph Bingham, the present society's committee, or any one of them, in the name and behalf of said society, receive the three hundred and ten pounds money, granted to this society in May last by the General Assembly, on the account of Rev. Thomas Clap's removal from us to the Rectorate of Yale College."

The loss in influence and authority was less easily supplied. The Windham people were quite unsettled by the removal of their head and censor, and, it is said, "acted like boys let out of school." Much as they had admired and revered their late pastor, they were apparently reluctant to re-subject themselves to such severity of discipline, and chose for a successor his precise opposite—a gentleman of great mildness and gentleness of character, quite deficient in administrative capacity—Mr. Stephen White of New Haven, a Yale graduate of the class of 1736. That Mr. White was acceptable to the people may be inferred from the pains taken to guard against his premature removal,

in the following vote: "Whereas, the inhabitants of said society, having had some considerable experience of Mr. Stephen White's ministerial abilities, to their general satisfaction, do now agree to give him a call to the work of the ministry and to continue among us in said work, as *long as he lives*, or is *able to preach* the Gospel." Six hundred pounds as a settlement and two hundred pounds salary were offered. These terms were accepted, and Mr. White ordained, December 24, 1749. The sermon on this occasion was preached by Rev. Solomon Williams of Lebanon. The Reverends Eleazer Williams, Joshua Meacham, Samuel Mosely and Ebenezer Devotion also took part in the services. The young minister found his parish in admirable order; all its affairs reduced to perfect system. Ecclesiastical matters were no longer managed by town authorities, but by the lawful society officers. Every head of a household was connected with the church, either by profession of faith or by owning the covenant. Family prayer was observed in every household, and every child consecrated by baptism. Profane swearing was but little known, and open violations of the Sabbath were very rare. "The people, as a body, were fearers of the Lord, and observers of the Sabbath and its duties." The membership of the church was two hundred and eighty-seven. The deacons then in service were Joshua Huntington, Ralph Wheelock, Eleazer Cary and Nathaniel Wales. Mr. White was married soon after his settlement to Mary, daughter of Major Thomas Dyer.

The secular affairs of the town were also prospering. Men of energy and capital filled the places made vacant by death and emigration. Thomas Dyer was now actively engaged in public affairs, a shop "in the street against his house, with a sufficient cartway each side," serving for his office. When the militia of the Colony was reorganized, in 1739, and the military companies of Windham, Mansfield, Coventry, Ashford, Willington, Stafford and Union, constituted the Fifth Regiment of Connecticut, Mr. Dyer was made its major. His son, Eliphalet, after graduation from Yale College, in 1740, at the age of nineteen, studied law in Windham. In 1744, he was appointed justice of the peace and captain of a military company. After the death of Mr. John Fitch, he was chosen town-clerk, and, in 1746, he was admitted to the bar of Windham County. Jedidiah Elderkin of Norwich, a descendant of John Elderkin of Lynn, four years the senior of young Dyer, had gained admittance two years previous. These young lawyers entered with much zeal upon the practice of their profession, and soon ranked among the foremost public men of the day. Law business was now extremely brisk in Windham and its vicinity, and a large number of cases were reported at every session of the

several courts. In 1743, another story was added to the jail, under the supervision of Jonathan and Jabez Huntington. Penalties, at this period, were extremely severe. Heavy fines, whippings and imprisonment were administered for slight offences. Those unable to pay fines and lawful debts were often bound out as servants. A year's service to John Ripley satisfied a judgment of £23. A debt of £50, doomed one unfortunate to three years' service for John Fitch, two years for Joshua Hutchins and six months for James Walden. Another was bound servant for eight years for a debt of £120.

The growth of the town made many public officers needful. In 1746, there were chosen a town-clerk and town treasurer, five selectmen, three collectors of town-rates, four constables, six grand-jurors, seven listers, four branders, three leather-sealers, six fence-viewers, eight tithing-men and ten surveyors. As, with all their thrift, highways were still wanting in many places, "to accommodate the town and many particular persons to travel to the several places of public worship,"—Isaac Burnap and Joseph Huntington were appointed a special committee to rectify it. The bridge crossing the Shetucket, between Windham and Lebanon, long maintained by private enterprise, was consigned to the care of Windham in 1735, by act of Assembly. Robert Hebard, Jun., was chosen by the town to inspect and take care of it. Paul Hebard and Israel Dimock were allowed by the town "to set up a blacksmith's shop or coal-house on the King's highway." The chief annoyance of Windham in this period of growth and prosperity was her boundary quarrel with Canterbury, which broke out afresh from time to time with ever-increasing bitterness and violence. Various legal decisions adjudged the disputed land to Canterbury, but were not recognized by Windham, who continued to retain it in possession, and kept an agent constantly in the field to defend the claim before the Courts and Assembly. Another alleged grievance was that of straitened limits. Large tracts of land were owned by individuals unwilling to sell at sufficiently low prices. An unsuccessful attempt was made to secure vacant land in Voluntown. Unable to find accommodations in their own neighborhood, a number of citizens discussed the feasibility of emigration, and, after the opening of new townships in the northwest of the Colony, thus memorialized the General Assembly :—

"*Windham*, May 10, 1737. Forasmuch as we are sundry of us single persons, and others of numerous families, and have but small accommodations of land, and considering that it may redound to the good of ourselves and children and advantageous to the Commonwealth—we humbly pray, that your Honors would please to grant us a town in the ungranted lands in this Colony, lying east of Weataug [*Salisbury*]*—*the northwest town from *Litchfield*, or some other of the free townships—for such a sum of money, and under such regulations and restrictions as your Honors shall think fit."



This request was denied, though urged by over forty petitioners, representing the Ripleys, Backuses, Huntingtons, Bingham, Abbes, Cranes, Barnaps, Waldos, Robinsons and other old Windham families. Though not successful in obtaining a free township, many of these petitioners subsequently removed to the new country, and aided in the settlement of towns in Litchfield County.

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The year 1745 is memorable in Windham annals for the first public execution in Windham County—a tragic event, awakening a very deep and painful interest in all the surrounding region. The supreme penalty of the law was inflicted upon a *woman*—a young girl-mother, charged with the murder of her child. Elizabeth Shaw—a descendant probably of William Shaw, who bought land on Little river in 1709—lived with her parents in Canada Parish, about two miles southwest from Windham Village. She is represented as a weak, simple girl, deficient in mental capacity. Her father was stern and rigid. Nothing is known of the preceding facts and circumstances until after giving birth secretly to a living child, the poor bewildered girl, fearful of exposure and punishment, stole away to a ledge of rocks near by, hid the babe in some nook or crevice, and left it to perish. Her father suspected and watched her, and—unable, perhaps, to force her to confession—himself, it is said, made accusation against her. She was arrested and examined. Search was made, and the poor little body found in the grim Cowatick Rocks. The grand-jurors found her guilty of murder, and committed her to Windham jail to await her trial. This was held September 17, 1745, at the session of the Superior Court. Roger Wolcott sat as chief judge; James Wadsworth, William Pitkin, Ebenezer Silliman and John Bulkley, as assistants. Samuel Huntington, Edward Waldo, Nathaniel Holbrook, Nathaniel Hide, Benjamin Fassett, Samuel Rust, Joseph Williams, Nathaniel Webb, Ignatius Barker, Josiah Kingsley, Joseph Parkhurst and James Danielson served as jurors. The greatest interest was felt in the trial, and a large number attended. The grand-jurors presented, “That one Elizabeth Shaw, Jun., of Windham, a single woman, was on the 29th of June, 1745, delivered of a living male bastard child, in Windham, and did secretly hide and dispose of the same in the woods in said Windham, and there left it until it perished for want of relief, and did endeavor to conceal the birth and death thereof, so that it should not come to light whether said child were born alive or not, and did cause to perish said child.” Details of the trial are not preserved. The prisoner pleaded, “Not guilty.” The names

and pleas of the counsel are unknown. The facts of the case were clearly proved. Extenuating circumstances had no weight. The jury judged that she was guilty of the murder, and the sentence was passed, "That she should go from hence to the common goal, and thence to the place of execution and there be hanged till she be dead, December 18, 1745."

This severe sentence was duly executed. In those stern days, a rigid enforcement of law was deemed the only safeguard of morality, and while there was the deepest commiseration for the unhappy victim, her mental incapacity and physical weakness were not supposed to mitigate her guilt. No public effort was apparently made to obtain a remission of the penalty. No Jeanie Deans was there to plead for an erring sister. If mild Mr. White counseled leniency, his sterner cotemporaries might have protested against it. A doubtful tradition reports that Elizabeth Shaw's father, repentant too late, went to Hartford and procured a reprieve from the Governor, but that on his way home was met by a sudden storm, the rivers became impassable, and his return was delayed till after the execution. On the fatal day, a gallows was erected on a hill a mile southwest from Windham Green. An immense concourse of people from all the adjacent country witnessed the mournful spectacle. Little children, too young to join in the procession, remembered vividly through life the long train, reaching from Gallows Hill to Windham Jail, following the cart which bore the hapless Elizabeth, sitting upon her coffin, crying continuously, "Oh, Jesus! have mercy upon my soul!" through the dreadful death-march and the last harrowing ceremonies. Mr. White conducted the usual religious services. Jabez Huntington officiated as sheriff. No report of this tragic affair is found in the newspapers of the day. A single additional item is gleaned from the Court records:—

"Allowed Mr. Sheriff Huntington, for cost and expense of doing  
execution on Elizabeth Shaw, . . . . . £29 5s.  
March 22, 1746."

#### IV.

CHANGES IN CANTERBURY. NEW MINISTERS AND MEETING-  
HOUSE. CONTROVERSY WITH WINDHAM. DISMISSAL  
OF MR. WADSWORTH.

THE remarkable freedom from disease and losses enjoyed by Canterbury till 1726 was followed by a very great mortality. Joseph Woodward and Jonathan Hide died in 1726; Major James Fitch, the

Rev. Mr. Estabrook and his wife, Tixhall Eusworth, Samuel Adams, Samuel Cleveland, Jun., and David Carver, in 1727; Stephen Frost, in 1728. Major Fitch retired from public life some years before his decease, and little is known of the latter days of this noted personage. His large landed estate had passed mainly out of his hands, and no record of its final settlement has been discovered. His son, Daniel, kept possession of the Peagscomsuck homestead. Jabez lived for a time in Newent, and then returned to Canterbury. The survivors of the remaining seven sons settled in other towns. His daughter, Jerusha, married Daniel Bissel, and died early. Lucy Fitch married Henry Cleveland of Canterbury. A tomb-stone in the old burial ground bears the subjoined inscription:—

“Here lies y<sup>e</sup> body of Major James Fitch. Esq., son of y<sup>e</sup> Reverend Mr. James Fitch, pastor, first of Saybrook, then of Norwich. He was born in Saybrook, 1647. He was very useful in his military and in his magistracy, to which he was chosen, served successively to y<sup>e</sup> great acceptation and advantage of his country, being a gentleman of good parts and very forward to promote y<sup>e</sup> civil and religious interests of it. Died November 10, 1727, aged 80 years.”

Another stone in the same ancient ground commemorates “y<sup>e</sup> Reverend and Pious and Learned Mr. Samuel Estabrook, y<sup>e</sup> 3d son of y<sup>e</sup> Reverend Mr. Joseph Estabrook, late pastor of y<sup>e</sup> church in Concord, who was y<sup>e</sup> first pastor of y<sup>e</sup> church in Canterbury, who departed this life to y<sup>e</sup> everlasting mercy of God, June 23d, 1727, in the 53d year of his age.” Mrs. Rebecca Estabrook, that “worthy, virtuous and pious gentlewoman,” died the December following. Mr. Estabrook left land with buildings, valued at £1,000, a library of over two hundred volumes, comprising many elaborate Latin works, and a bountiful supply of household furniture and wearing apparel. His son, Nehemiah, was bequeathed the “housing and estate.” Hobart was “to be brought up to college,” and have £50 and y<sup>e</sup> books and papers. To his daughter Mary was left £20 and the movable goods.

The venerable Elisha Paine and Obadiah Johnson were still surviving of the older settlers. Deliverance Brown, Samuel Butts, Timothy Backus, Joseph, Josiah, Henry and Moses Cleveland, Elisha and Solomon Paine, and other sons of the first settlers, were now in active life. Elisha Paine, Jun., was practicing as an attorney. Captain Joseph Adams and Colonel John Dyer were among the most active and influential citizens.

The first minister procured after the death of Mr. Estabrook was Mr. Samuel Jenison. September 12, 1727, the town empowered Deacon Thomas Brown and Mr. John Dyer, “to go or send to y<sup>e</sup> Rev. Mr. Jenison, who lately preached among us, to see whether they can prevail with him to come and help us in y<sup>e</sup> work of y<sup>e</sup> ministry, and to invite him to said work for two or three months if they can, and in

case they cannot prevail with him, then to apply themselves to Mr. Buckley, and in case they cannot prevail with him, then to look elsewhere, and to do word to such other ministers neighboring to us as are willing to help us, so as, if possible, we may not be destitute of the means of the gospel." Also, voted, "That y<sup>e</sup> selectmen make a rate for y<sup>e</sup> paying of Rev. Mr. Estabrooks, deceased, his salary, for ye whole year last past."

Mr. Jenison being prevailed upon, the town proceeded, January 30, 1728, to offer him "the sum of one hundred pounds—as it now passes among us in true bills of credit of either of said Colonies of Connecticut, boston, Rhoad Island or New hamshair—sallary yearly; he settling himself and continuing in town in ye work of the ministry"—to which ten pounds would be added "when Mr. Jenison comes to be settled amongst us and hath a family of his own." Before completing their arrangements, the question of discipline was debated. The Canterbury church had never formally accepted Saybrook Platform, and some of its members were extremely opposed to it, and now stated to Mr. Jenison their objections, and insisted that he should sign with the church an explicit agreement to follow Cambridge and not Saybrook form of discipline. Mr. Jenison consenting, a formal call was given and accepted, and the first Wednesday of September appointed for ordination. A committee was appointed, "to provide for ye ministers and messengers that may be employed in ye management of said affair at ye proper charge of ye town"—when, for some unassigned cause, the agreement lapsed, and Mr. Jenison disappears suddenly and forever from town and record.

A committee was chosen in November, "to supply the pulpit for three months at the charge of ye town." Various sums of money were allowed, for going to New Haven and Farmington after ministers. The next candidate secured was Mr. John Wadsworth of Milton, a graduate of Harvard in 1723. January 25, 1729, it was agreed, "that they would not make any farther tryall of any other persons in ye work of ye ministry, but would call Mr. John Wadsworth, offering him one hundred pounds a year, and one hundred and fifty pounds settlement, to be paid fifty pounds a year—adding ten pounds yearly to the salary after the first three years." Mr. Wadsworth, after due consideration, thus replied:—

"To the town of Canterbury:—

God having, in his own unsearchable Providence, bereaved you of your pious pastor (whose memory be blessed), and graciously disposed you, with unwearied endeavors, to seek after a setelment (notwithstanding your frustrations), so that you might enjoy God in all ways of his appointment, and your hearts being disposed to invite me (however unworthy of so sacred an office) to be your shepherd under Christ, I, with most strong convictions of my natural inability to perform ye arduous duties of so high a station, with



entire reliance on Christ's promised presence and the Spirit's gracious assistance, accept ye vocation, I trust, with a suitable resolution to walk worthy of it. Under these considerations, I accept, that while I shall be your gospel minister I have a gospel maintenance, not only in youth but also in old age, if spared thereto; in sickness as well as in health, that I may have physic as well as food, which I think is not so clearly exprest in ye town vote. As touching the annual salary, I look upon an hundred and ten pounds as ye stated sum, but not unalterable. Times are changeable, and we in them. If for my comfortable maintenance, £150, £200 or £300 per annum is necessary, as is requisite in Carolina. I shall expect it be freely offered; on the contrary, if ten be sufficient, I remit ye hundred. As for ye settlement, I am persuaded you are all sensible what an inconsiderable sum £150 is to procure one withal. I desire it may be paid ye first year, but if that be too burthensome, ye hundred ye first year and ye fifty ye next."

The town was somewhat perplexed by these ambiguous requirements, and was obliged to ask an explanation of the answer, and insist upon having terms more "fixedly stated." This point being settled, another difficulty arose. Mr. Wadsworth, like Mr. Jenison, was asked to enter into a written covenant to govern the church according to Cambridge Platform. In taking his degree, he had signed his name to the thesis, "That the Congregational Church was most agreeable to the institutions of Christ of any human composures of that nature," but declined "to tie himself absolutely to govern according to any human composure whatever new light he might have." This refusal "put the church into agreeable surprise." There were consultations in this and that part of the room. Mr. John Bacon—afterwards deacon—with "great affection and concern," begged them not to break in pieces. He believed the published opinion of the candidate would suffice, and upon this ground they finally consented unanimously to confirm the call. One of the brethren afterwards wrote him, that had he not signed the specified thesis, "he would as soon have trusted a Papish Jesuit." All obstacles being removed, Mr. Wadsworth was ordained, September 3, 1729—£15 6s. 11d. being allowed for ordination expenses.

The settlement of a new minister was soon followed by the erection of a new meeting-house. January 5, 1731, the town voted, "That a new meeting-house should be built, fifty feet long, forty-five wide, twenty-two between joyns, and sett on ye town's land, where, or near where, the old meeting-house now stands." This site was very objectionable to a part of the inhabitants, being but half a mile from Plainfield and four miles from the west bounds of Canterbury. A movement was now in progress for including the north end of Canterbury in a society about to be formed from parts of Pomfret and Mortlake, and thus the town was unsettled and divided. In the fall of 1731, sixty-seven inhabitants petitioned for liberty to build on the old meeting-house spot, and thirty three protested against it. Decision was deferred. Meanwhile a new society was erected, including the north part of Canterbury. In May, 1732, William Throope, Experience Porter and

Joseph Kingsbury were appointed to view the town of Canterbury and settle the site for its projected meeting-house. The question of a further division into east and west societies was seriously agitated. The committee called the inhabitants together, "heard reasons and called a vote, and there were forty-six against building, and twenty for dividing." They next called upon the inhabitants of the new society to vote, and "twenty desired the old parish might be divided, and nineteen were against it, and five inhabitants of Mortlake, making twenty-four." After thoroughly viewing old and new parishes, they "thought it best not to divide," and then proceeded to hear the petitioners respecting the place for a meeting-house, and finding them much divided in opinion, called them to pass one by one and declare where they would have it set, and there were twenty-nine for the old place, and twenty-nine for Wm. Baker's, and fourteen for Tryall Baker's, and two for Solomon Paine's. They then put the vote, and there were thirty-one for the old place, and thirty-three for William Baker's, half a mile westward. Again they called for a vote, whether the site should be at William or Tryall Baker's, and there were eleven for Tryall, and fourteen for William Baker's. Then, after thoroughly viewing the land, north and south, to know how it might be accommodated with *a way*, the committee agreed, "That the place shall be by ye country road leading from ye old meeting-house to Windham town, not exceeding eight or ten rods from said Baker's house, half a mile west from ye old meeting-house." The Assembly, in October, approved and confirmed the spot, and ordered the inhabitants to proceed with building.

This order was not obeyed. Descendants of old settlers settled in the east of the town could not be reconciled to this change of location. In May, 1733, John Dyer and Elisha Paine presented the Assembly with a memorial, showing the great difficulty they labored under respecting building their meeting-house, that the vote taken by the committee was scattered and broken by reason of the recent change in society and not a fair expression of opinion, and gave the following reasons for not proceeding with the work:—

- "I. The committee did not understand the circumstances.
- II. Laid too much weight on the broken vote.
- III. Place selected held by owners at unreasonable terms.
- IV. So uneven that when one sill is on the ground, the other is eleven foot high.
- V. Roads must cross private lots.
- VI. Society so settled that more than two-thirds of persons and estates must travel from ye old place to ye new, and think it beyond our duty that we, who have borne ye brunt and heat of the day, and still bear the greatest part of ye charges, should be obliged to travel out of ye main street, that is become a fenced lane almost from one end to ye other, and go into the woods about three-fourths of a mile, where there is nothing but trees except one house to comfort any in distress, no land suitable to build on as the roads to the stated place are not only very bad but very difficult to be obtained, while at ye

old place, all ye roads meet and with much labor have been made fit for travel. Also, it is not so at one end as it looks, people being mostly settled on ye east side; west side not likely to be settled in this generation—land being poor and rough and held by non-residents in large tracts. For all these reasons, beg to be excused from building on assigned spot. The committee had relations living west and were connected with Norwich proprietors. Hope we may not be obliged to build our meeting-house on land not ours, when we have prepared a very commodious green for the purpose, and have taken pains for roads, &c.”

Daniel Brewster, John Brown and Captain John Bulkley were accordingly appointed, who reported in favor of the old green, “as the roads best lead to it, six feet southward of place where old meeting-house stands.” This site was confirmed by the Assembly, and the inhabitants again ordered “to proceed to set up and finish meeting-house at the above described place.” The more westerly residents remonstrated in vain. The society committee, in May, 1735, reported progress; house raised and workmen agreed to finish, and in time the house was made ready for occupation, but from the loss of the first book of society records no details are attainable.

The boundary controversy with Windham was revived in 1731, by attempting to levy taxes, perhaps in preparation for the new meeting-house, from Samuel Cook and Caleb Woodward, residents of the disputed territory. Cook, who was a member of the Scotland church, and had hitherto paid taxes in Windham, petitioned the Assembly in October, 1731, in behalf of himself and Woodward, declaring that they had always supposed themselves inhabitants of Windham and had paid taxes there, but were now assessed by Canterbury and doomed for their head and stocks. The Assembly ordered, “That no distress shall be levied on the proprietors by any officer of Canterbury until the line be settled, and petitioners shall pay rates to Windham,” whereupon Woodward appeared with a counter memorial, showing that Cook had petitioned falsely; that his house and the improvement of his land fell within Canterbury, according to the settlement of the line made by the General Assembly in 1714, and confirmed by the surveyor of Windham County in 1731; that after he had given in his list and paid rates to Canterbury, listers from Windham had presumed to assess him four-fold. Memorialist was “greatly distressed and uncertain what to do, for when the list is given to Windham, Canterbury four-folds it, and when given to Canterbury, Windham dooms it.” The difficulty was increased by a false representation made to the Assembly in October, 1731, by Cook, “who, for a long time before said prayer was exhibited was in Canterbury train-band, and very constantly trained there and came to meeting on Sabbath days, till a very short time before petition he drew his house, as he supposed, within Windham bounds—(but happened to be mistaken)—and obtained an act that they should not be forced to do duty to Canterbury till line was settled,

which memorialist supposed was well done long before obtaining said act, so that is very dark. Please tell me," concludes the distressed memorialist, "what to do that I may be safe, and not devoured by two when I ought to satisfy but one. Wales and Skiff and Isaac Burnap have warned and doomed me four-fold. Line between Canterbury and Windham was found and refreshed May 17, 1713, and acknowledged by the Assembly—a southwest line from Appaquage to an oak tree west of Nipmuck Path. Josiah Conant was desired by Captain Adams and John Dyer, town agents, to run the line as formerly agreed on in 1713, and had performed the service." Jonathan Stevens and William Thompson, who helped carry the chain on this occasion, also declared, "that Woodward's house and orchard were east of the line so run some considerable way."

No answer was granted to this request, and the petitioner left to wait the re-settlement of the boundary-line, which was delayed from session to session. In 1737, Richard Abbe and Jabez Huntington appeared before the General Assembly in behalf of Windham, declaring, "That they did not regard the settlement of 1713, but have proceeded to lay out, settle, and improve lands according to their patent of 1703, that Canterbury claimed a line two hundred and twenty rods west of Windham's, and asking that Canterbury's doings might be set aside :

1. Because they proceeded according to Windham patent of 1686, which had been before vacated.
2. Because Bushnell's tree, mentioned by Canterbury, was marked by Bushnell and Huntington without any rule, only as they measured eight miles south from Appaquage.

Both houses refused to grant this request, but but again, two years later, they returned to the charge. A committee was then appointed, which reported, "That the deed of Clark and Buckingham lay west of Nipmuck Path—that Plainfield (then including Canterbury) was granted east of Windham ; that the second grant of Windham, including Clark and Buckingham's purchase, was bounded east by Nipmuck Path, and they therefore concluded that the dividing line between the towns should run "south about ten degrees east," to a black oak by Nipmuck Path, according to the line originally marked out by Bushnell. Windham still refused to accept this decision, and continued to maintain possession of the disputed land till the prospect of one of its inhabitants becoming a public charge gave the matter a new aspect. Edward Colburn, or Coburn, with William Shaw, Robert Moulton and David Canada, bought land and settled near Little River in 1709. Part of Colburn's land was in the disputed gore, but his house was in Windham, and he was numbered among its inhabitants. His son Robert, as he grew up, was subject to intervals of "distraction," but had sense enough to marry his neighbor, Hannah Canada, and was



"crowded out" by his father, "onto that end of his farm that lay between the controverted lines," and there lived with his wife, paying rates to Windham as ordered by the General Assembly, and accounted one of its inhabitants till, in 1738, his distemper returned, and he became wholly incapable of taking care of himself. Edward Colburn, who was then possessed of a plentiful estate, took his son home and for a time maintained him, but then sold his land in Windham, removed to Massachusetts and soon afterwards deceased, leaving his helpless son to the mercy of the public. Windham, who preferred her land free from incumbrance, sent him over to Canterbury; Canterbury, declining to support paupers when debarred from receiving taxes, instantly returned him. The unfortunate lunatic was tossed to and fro between the contending townships—a process little calculated to lessen his "distraction." At a town-meeting in 1741, Windham voted:—

"Whereas, one Robert Colburn, that is now residing in this town, is under such influence of distraction that he is not able to take care of himself, and has been supported by ye town of Windham at great cost and charge, and of right belongs to Canterbury; Voted,—That Captain Fitch be agent for Windham to appear at Court to recover the charge."

The battle-field was thus transferred to Windham Court-house. John Dyer and Joseph Adams acted as agents for Canterbury; Isaac Burnap—after the decease of Capt. Fitch—for Windham. After long delay, the support of Colburn was assigned to Canterbury on the ground that the decision of the General Court's committee had adjudged the disputed tract to that township. This decision hastened the final settlement of that vexatious controversy. The worth of the disputed land was doubtless much less than the cost of supporting its afflicted incumbent, and Windham consented to relinquish her claim and acknowledge the original boundary line, which she had so persistently repudiated. "An act establishing Windham Line" terminated this half-century controversy in 1752.

These troublesome contests, and the building the new meeting-house, so absorbed the public interest and energies that little else was accomplished. A new school-house was, however, built on the Green, and a writing school occasionally allowed. In 1734, it was agreed, "That all y<sup>e</sup> male persons that are born in this town shall, at the age of twenty-one years, be vested with all the privileges that those persons are that were admitted town inhabitants by vote of said town." A town stock of ammunition was procured.

Canterbury, with adjoining towns, suffered in a sad accident occurring at the raising of a bridge over the Shetucket River, in 1728. One end of the bridge, with forty men upon it, gave way, and was precipitated into the stream below. Only one person was killed instantly—Jonathan Gale of Canterbury, a youth nineteen years of age, the only son of a

widowed mother, "a very hopeful youth, the darling of the family." Many were seriously wounded, and at first, taken out and laid by for dead. Lieutenant Samuel Butts, Samuel Parish and Ebenezer Harris are reported among "the men most considerably wounded."

A bridge over the formidable and troublesome Quinebaug was built in 1728, by two gentlemen of Plainfield, but was soon carried away. Another was built at the same place by Samuel Butts in 1733, and maintained a few years by private subscription, till carried away by ice. Jabez Fitch—son of Major James Fitch—having returned to Canterbury after a few years' residence in Newent, next achieved a bridge over the rebellious stream—the only one he asserted south of Sabin's, in Pomfret, ice having carried away all the others—and was allowed the privilege of collecting toll by the General Assembly in 1740. In the same year, the military company was reorganized—Obadiah Johnson chosen its captain, Stephen Frost, lieutenant, and Solomon Paine, ensign.

The church gained in numbers during Mr. Wadsworth's ministry, but was somewhat weakened by the long meeting house controversy. A few of its early members were dismissed to help form the Second Church of Pomfret. Elisha Paine, Sen., and Samuel Cleveland died in 1736; Deacon Thomas Brown in 1733; Deacon John Bacon in 1741. In 1741, the Canterbury church was greatly perplexed and distressed by a criminal charge alleged against the pastor by a female resident. The Windham County Consociation was called together, May 27th; the grievous difficulty laid before them and their judgment asked upon the following points, viz.:—

"I. Whether the said pastor ought not to be dismissed from the pastoral charge of us.

II. Whether, if he be dismissed as aforesaid, we ought to hold in charity with him as a brother."

The complainant herself then appeared before the council, and solemnly re-affirmed the charge against the pastor. The council, having maturely considered the first question, and that the Rev. Mr. Wadsworth had not attempted to disprove or remove the suspicion of the imputation brought against him, was of opinion:—

"I. That his usefulness and serviceableness in the ministry were cut off and taken away by the scandal he lyeth under, and that he should be released, and they did declare him released from his pastoral office.

II. That there are so strong suspicions of his guilt that the church ought not to hold in charity with him as a brother as the matter now stands; and we think Mr. Wadsworth is bound to clear up his reputation if he be capable of it, or else make a public confession, or else submit to a public admonition for the said crime charged upon him."

Mr. Wadsworth submitted silently to his sentence, gave up his charge, and returned to his home in Milton without attempting to clear up his reputation or make the prescribed confession. The Canterbury

people, with rare leniency and forbearance, refrained from further prosecution of this affair, deeming loss of ministerial standing and the reproaches of conscience a sufficient punishment for the alleged crime. However this may have been, it was in striking contrast with the penalty inflicted upon poor Elizabeth Shaw in the adjoining parish.

## V.

### PLAINFIELD AFFAIRS. GROWTH IN VOLUNTOWN.

**P**PLAINFIELD, after the settlement of its early quarrels and difficulties, enjoyed many years of remarkable peace and tranquillity, with little to do but to manage its perambulatory schools, look after its General Field, and fill up vacancies in its meeting-house. In 1727, two shillings a week were allowed for keeping the schoolmaster's horse, and the lower vacancy in the meeting-house filled up with pews—persons to build in the upper part as they thought best—and in the following year, the house was seated according to age and rates. In 1728, a very great work was accomplished—the completion of a substantial bridge over the “tedious Quinebogus” by Joseph Williams and Timothy Pierce, Jun., who thus memorialized upon this achievement:—

“To the General Assembly sitting in Hartford. May 9, 1728. The petition of the subscribers sheweth to your Honors, the many attempts that have been made by many of the inhabitants of the towns of Plainfield and Canterbury for the making a good and sufficient cart-bridge over the river Quinebaug, between said towns; it being so extraordinarily difficult and hazardous, for near half the year almost every year, and many travelers have escaped of their lives to admiration. The same river can't be paralleled in this Colony. It descends near fifty or sixty miles, out of the wilderness, and many other rivers entering into it, cause it to be extremely furious and hazardous. And also the road through said towns, over said river, being as great as almost any road in the Government, for travelers. And now your petitioners, with the encouragement of divers persons (£98 8s.) have assumed to build a good cart-bridge, twenty-seven feet high from the bottom of said river—which is four feet higher than any flood known these thirty years—and sixteen and a half rods long; have carefully kept account of the cost, beside trouble which is great, (cost amounting to £424), and ask for a grant of ungranted lands.”

The Assembly ordered, “That said bridge be kept a toll-bridge for ten years, receiving for each man, horse and load, four-pence; single man, two pence; each horse and all neat cattle, two-pence per head; sheep and swine, two shillings per score; always provided, that those who have contributed toward said bridge be free till reimbursed what they have paid.” Two years later, on account of the great expense incurred in building this bridge, it was further resolved, “That no person shall keep any boat or ferry on said Quinebaug River for the

transportation of travelers, within one mile of said bridge, on the penalty of the law." A bridge over Moosup River, by Kingsbury's Mill, was built by Samuel Spalding in 1729. In 1737, Captain Lawrence and William Marsh were appointed by the town to repair half the bridge that goes over Quinebaug by Dr. Williams', provided Canterbury repair the other half. Canterbury choosing to build a new bridge rather than repair the damaged one, Plainfield ordered a road to be laid out from the country road to Canterbury line, to adjoin with the road Canterbury shall lay out to the new bridge over Quinebaug nearly opposite Captain Butts'. A bridge over Moosup on the road to William Deam's, was accepted by the town in 1740, "provided a suitable way be found for passing to Deam's mill."

In 1739, twenty pounds were added to Mr. Coit's salary, "as long as he is capable of carrying on public meetings, provided he will acquit past demands." During this year, the military companies in the towns of Plainfield, Canterbury, Pomfret, Killingly and Voluntown, were constituted the Eleventh Connecticut Regiment. Timothy Pierce of Plainfield was appointed its colonel; John Dyer of Canterbury its lieutenant-colonel; Hezekiah Sabin of Thompson Parish, its major. Colonel Pierce was now one of the most prominent and respected citizens of Windham County, a member of the Governor's Council, Judge of the County and Probate Courts—"all which offices he executed with such diligence and care as to be unblamable. He was a father to the town and a promoter of the common welfare of all when he had opportunity, and was also of an extraordinary good, pious and Christian conversation."

In 1740, Plainfield ordered, "That the meeting-house be viewed and repaired, school committee hire a teacher—persons that work on meeting house and board the school-master to have a reasonable reward." Ten shillings a week was deemed a *reasonable* recompense for the master's "diet and horse-keeping." The general Field was now in such good condition that the number of "field-drivers" was reduced to eleven.

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Voluntown, in 1726, was given over to discord and confusion. The meeting house site was still in controversy. In attempting to accommodate everybody, no one had been suited. The inhabitants refused to accept the established centre and gravitated to various points on the borders. Religious services still alternated from Thomas Cole's house to Ebenezer Dow's. The injunction to carry on the work of building was disregarded, and not a man would bestir himself to prepare timber for a frame, while that constructed by Thomas Dow stood uncovered



upon their favorite hill-top. A petition of John Gallup and others complained of irregular proceedings of the inhabitants of said Voluntown in admitting inhabitants in their meeting, May 2, 1727. Upon a full hearing, the Assembly considered, that the town was in May, 1721, allowed the privilege of choosing its own officers and carrying on its own town affairs; also, that towns have the right by law to judge of the qualifications and consequently the power of admitting their inhabitants, and was therefore of opinion that the admission of said inhabitants was irregular and against the rules of law, and declared the same to be void and votes made after their admission to have no force. And insomuch as there was a remissness in improving the tax levied for the meeting-house—Joseph Adams, Jabez Parkhurst and Richard Abbe were appointed a committee to receive the same and see that it be improved, and if Voluntown still neglect to carry on the work, the committee was to assume the oversight thereof. Money in the hands of Joseph Backus, received by the sale of lands in the addition to Voluntown—a hundred and ten pounds in bills of public credit, and two guineas—was ordered to be delivered to the Treasurer; the bills to pay public debts, the guineas left to the special order of the Assembly.

With all its drawbacks, the town was gaining in strength and numbers. Sturdy Scotch-Irish emigrants established themselves within its borders, preferring the society of old friends and the Westminster form of discipline to richer lands and greater social privileges. At a town meeting, December, 1728, Captain John Gallup was chosen moderator; Captain Gallup, John Dixon and Ebenezer Dow, townsmen; Ebenezer Dow, town-clerk. Alexander Stewart, Ebenezer Pearce, John Jameson, Robert Williams, Jun., John Canada, William Trumbull, John Gordon, William Hamilton, Robert Dixon and Peter Miller, were admitted inhabitants. Many of these settlers united with the church, and helped sustain the minister and religious institutions. John Wylie, on his arrival, presented the following certificate:—

“That John Wylie and his wife, Agnes Park, and their children Elizabeth, John, Jean, Peter and James, during their residence in this Presbyterian congregation of Cullybaky, in the parish of Ahoghill and county of Antrim, which was from their infancy, are free of any scandal or church censure known to us preceding the date hereof is certified at Cullybaky, April 23, 1728. This by appointment, we having no minister:—

John Wylie, Sen.  
Gain Stowell.  
Matthew Clark.”

Affairs in 1728, were so far settled that the town resumed the building of its meeting-house. John Dixon and Thomas Dow were ordered to take account of the “stuff” provided for it. In 1729, a frame was raised and covered, and John Dixon directed to furnish glass. In 1730,

a body of seats was ordered, "as soon as may be, John Dixon to have five pounds to make six seats." Meanwhile, the house was seated with boards, ceiled with girths and made ready for its first town-meeting, December 22, 1731. Materials were then ordered for laying floors in the galleries, and workmen engaged to make floors and build stairs and the front, in said galleries. The vacant room on the sides of the house was "disposed of to such persons as should oblige themselves to set up good pews in said room, and ceil the same up to the girth opposite said pews—every man his room according to his rate-bill; pews to be built by November 1, 1732." The Rev. Mr. Dorrance was allowed the first pew at the right hand of the pulpit. The pew spots were granted to John Gallup, Ebenezer Dow, Charles and John Campbell, John Dixon, Alexander Gordon, John Smith and Adam Kasson—"chief men"—and pews were in time completed. In 1733, a committee was chosen to build seats in the gallery and finish the ceiling under the same; also voted, "That there be a broad alley from ye south door of ye meeting-house to ye pulpit, and the room on the lower floor filled up with seats; also, to ceil the meeting-house all around, up and down." In 1734, Patrick McClennan, Ebenezer Dow, Adam Kasson, John Keigwin, Alexander Gordon, John Campbell, John Gibson and John Wylie were empowered "to make seats and seat the inhabitants at their pleasure—that is, to move any at their pleasure, and that they lay out such persons as shall build."

The meeting-house thus completed after such long delay and conflict was acceptable to the great mass of the people, and probably well filled with hearers. People who lived "out of Voluntown" over the Rhode Island line, or on the borders of Plainfield and Killingly, were granted "equal privileges in the meeting-house if they pay their proportion." This condition not being always observed, it was voted, in 1734, "That all persons who live over the line in Rhode Island Colony, who belong to our community and do not give in their list and pay their proportion yearly, shall be looked upon as strangers and transient persons." A few Baptists were numbered among the inhabitants, and Isaac Ecclestone—"one of ye people commonly called Quakers"—strayed over from Westerly. Adam Kasson succeeded Jacob Bacon in the deacon's office. Mr. Dorrance gave good satisfaction for a time, and was much respected by his brethren in the ministry, though his Presbyterianism excited some jealousy. In 1737, it was reported to the Windham County Association, "That Mr. Dorrance was a member of the Presbytery of Boston, and had intermeddled in the ordination of Rev. Mark Gregory"—a report very "grievous" to some of its members. Mr. Dorrance, thereupon declared, "That he never was a member of said Presbytery, declined when desired to be and had no

desire to relinquish this Association to join any other; that he assisted in Mr. Gregory's ordination, not to intermeddle where there was any difference, but to gratify the repeated desire of the gentleman to be ordained, being formerly of his acquaintance—not as a member of the Presbytery but as one of an ordaining council, and would be careful for the time to come not to be concerned in cases out of this establishment when there is opposition."

A highway was soon laid out from Voluntown meeting-house to Stonington. John Gallup, John Smith and the townsmen were appointed to lay out other necessary highways. A sign-post was ordered "south side of Voluntown meeting-house." December 4, 1732, it was voted, "That there shall be a surkelating school kep and a school-master hired at ye town's charge." In March, 1735, it was further ordered, "That the school be kept in four places, three months in a place, six months in ye north end and six months in ye south end, dividing ye town by a line from Alexander Gordon's to Ebenezer Dow's house—and that the master, John Dunlap, should have thirty pounds money, and sufficient meat, drink, washing and lodging, for keeping school eleven months and eighteen days, and in ye night, when convenient." The first school-house in town was built in 1737, "four rods from ye northwest corner of ye meeting-house, and a rate of twopence allowed for the same." A pound was permitted on John Kasson's land, he serving as keeper, in 1735, and the people north of Pachaug River were also allowed "to build a town-pound at their own cost."

Disputed boundaries and land titles still disturbed the peace of the town. Upon memorial of several inhabitants and proprietors, praying for allowance of lands taken from them by Rhode Island line—the Assembly granted, October, 1729, "That those persons that have had all or any part of their lands taken off should be repaid out of the public treasury, according to the proportion paid for purchase." But as in addition to loss of land these petitioners had suffered heavily in defending their claim in processes of law, "Nathaniel French and John Gibson—formerly of Voluntown, but since the running of the boundary line of Providence Plantation"—farther represented to the Assembly, October 14, 1731, "That after having purchased lands and performed conditions they had been ejected by pretended proprietors belonging to Rhode Island line, and judgment procured against them, the cost of which amounted to over a hundred pounds, besides time and pocket expenses, which burthen would be too hard for them unless the Honorable Assembly, out of their "moral goodness and Christian charity, would extend favor and help pay this intolerable cost." In response to this plea, fifty pounds were granted.

The mysterious Stoyell controversy still gave the town much trouble. The title to a "gore of land" on Egunk Hill was now the point at issue between a number of Voluntown residents and the Pomfret school-master. The former apparently held the land under gift or purchase from Winthrop; the latter by purchase from Old Voluntown proprietors. A "piece of land" in this vicinity was secured by John Dixon from the Assembly in 1735, on the representation that it was common or Government land, whereupon Thomas Cole protested, "That he had bought this same land and procured a second deed of it, yet now designing men thought they could quarrel him out of it—that John Dixon had got a grant and was expecting further confirmation of the land the petitioner had already paid for, and begged to have his deed preserved and confirmed." Many lawsuits resulted from these claims and complications. Stoyell, in 1738, appealed from the decision of the Superior Court to the General Assembly, and asked for a new trial, declaring that those who held land within the designated gore, held them to all intents and purposes as if literally included in the original grant to Voluntown; that Winthrop had nothing in the premises at that date but a pretended purchase of James and other Indians, without bounds or description agreeing to the land granted to Voluntown; that the taking away of part of the original grant by Rhode Island made it needful for Voluntown to abut west on Plainfield, and thus the contested land rightfully accrued to the Voluntown proprietors from whom Stoyell had purchased it. The Assembly refused to grant a new trial, but upon renewed request granted a hearing. Robert and John Park, and other old residents, testified that the land was within the bound given by the Winthrops to Plainfield proprietors, and had been more than twenty years in actual possession of the Gallups and others, and that Stoyell had himself recognized their right, and consequently no farther trial was allowed him. An attempt to eject Thomas Douglas and John McClellan from their land in this gore was equally unsuccessful—the Superior Court deciding, March, 1743, "that the defendants were not guilty in manner and form as the plaintiffs have alleged—and Mr. Stoyell was compelled to relinquish his claim to Egunk. Whether these decisions were in accordance with absolute right and justice it is impossible now to determine.

As the Voluntown land was still largely owned by non-resident descendants of original grantees scattered about in several towns, it was found very difficult to manage it properly. Proprietors often failed to receive notice of projected meetings, or were prevented from attendance by heavy floods and great storms. "Sensible that their method of warning meetings was not well-considered," the proprietors agreed in April, 1737, "that when fifteen proprietors should judge there was



necessity for a meeting and apply themselves to the clerk, and give under their hands that they judged it needful, then the clerk should send forth notice to warn all such proprietors, inserting all the material things, and set one such notification upon ye sign-post in Voluntown twenty days before the time appointed, and also to send copies to West Stonington, Groton, New London and Norwich." September 13, 1737, Manasseh Minor, Robert Dixon and John Gordon were appointed a committee to lay out common lots, and renew bounds of first lots. Samuel Banister was chosen attorney, to use all lawful means for recovering possession of lands taken away by Rhode Island, receiving one-half of the land thus regained. Thirty-one proprietors, representing fifty-four rights, protested against this vote at a subsequent meeting, declaring that the day of meeting was very rainy and the rivers very high and deep, and many of the proprietors living in neighboring towns, it being a very difficult time to travel in, there was but a very small number—about eleven—present. In consequence of their remonstrance, the power of attorney given to Banister was declared null and void. In response to a petition from their very humble servant, John Dixon, setting forth his great industry and untired diligence in pursuing after and taking care of the interests of the proprietors there many years, "one hundred acres in ye undivided land of Voluntown" were allowed him. In 1740, John Stoyell was appointed attorney, and a committee directed to divide all the remaining lands in the names of the original proprietors.

In 1739, the vacant mile north of Voluntown—which had long remained "a peculiar," to its great damage and disorder—was annexed to the town by formal act of Assembly. With this addition to its territory, the town again essayed a more regular settlement. No free-men had yet been sworn, no country taxes paid, no representatives sent to the General Assembly. In 1736-7, William Park, John Gaston, Thomas Kasson, Benjamin Pierce, Walter Trumbull, Robert Campbell, Benjamin Gallup, James Kasson, John Montgomery, James McGonagle and Robert Thompson were admitted inhabitants. April 8, 1740, a special meeting was called at the meeting-house, and the freeman's oath, as appointed by the law of the Colony, admitted to a large number of inhabitants. First on the list was Rev. Samuel Dorrance, followed by Deacon Adam Kasson, Alexander Gordon, James Campbell, James Douglas, John Dixon, John Smith, Jeremiah Kinne and all the leading citizens. John Dixon and John Kasson were then elected the first representatives from Voluntown to the General Assembly. It was voted, "That there be a highway on Egunk Hill, from ye house of John Anderson till it intercepts ye highway that goes from the meeting-house to the south end of the town, and to alter the latter highway

from places where it was bad traveling to good ground, as near as where it now goes as possible. The proprietors also ordered necessary highways on Egunk Hill, as far as the common land extended, and the relaying of the highway from the meeting-house to the town of Preston. The division of land ordered in 1740, was delayed till 1747, when all previous committees were dismissed, and Humphrey Avery, Charles Campbell, Robert Dixon, Samuel Gordon and John Wylie, Jun., appointed to divide the common lots to each proprietor or his heirs, re-measure and re-bound old lots and lay out cedar swamps, which was satisfactorily accomplished. The committee sold land to Walter Trumbull, James Kinne, John McGonagle and others. Denison's Hill was confirmed to Captain George Denison of Stonington. The cedar and pine swamps, said to be the best in the County, were laid out and divided. The lot on which the meeting-house stood, and the burial-place adjoining, were sequestered for the use of the inhabitants of the town and their successors. Several of the original lots had not been taken up by those to whom they were granted.

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## VI.

SECOND SOCIETY IN KILLINGLY. THOMPSON PARISH. MEETING-HOUSE. CHURCH ORGANIZATION. ORDINATION OF MR. CABOT.

THE colony-land north of Killingly, so persistently claimed by that township, was still unorganized. In 1727, the Dudleys, Wolcott and Thompson—non-resident owners—together with Samuel Morris, who had purchased part of the Dudley farm, again petitioned the General Assembly of Connecticut, showing:—

“That this tract of land was now possessed by sundry persons, some by purchase of Killingly and some by grants in country land, and we desire to have each one enjoy his purchase, because it is inhabitants that do make a town, and a great part of the remaining land is rough and broken and but little more fit to be inhabited, and, therefore, pray that a new town may be made there, so that we may know what town we are in.”

The pleas offered by Joseph Leavens and Joseph Cady on behalf of Killingly in abatement of this petition were judged sufficient, and the request refused. The inhabitants of this tract were now becoming very urgent for greater privileges, and as Killingly had assumed its jurisdiction they applied to her for relief, and, Jan. 30, 1728, received liberty from that town to embody as a distinct society or precinct. It

was agreed that the dividing line should begin, "at a heap of stones, three rods south of Mr. Blanchard's barn, nigh where he lives, and an old cellar in Mr. Wilson's field in said Killingly; thence west to Quinebaug River, and east to Rhode Island line"—about a mile south of the original north bound of Killingly. A petition for confirmation of this agreement, signed by Benjamin Bixby in behalf of the north inhabitants, and by Peter Aspinwall for the south, was presented to the General Assembly in May, 1728, and though Samuel Morris again appeared, "laboring under great hardships and difficulties from having his rights and properties encroached upon by some people of Killingly," the petition was granted. A warrant from Justice Joseph Leavens June 18, 1728, represented—

"That whereas there is a precinct set off at the north end of the town of Killingly by an Act of the General Court, held at Hartford in May last, and they want to be imbodyed: These are therefore in his Majesty's name, to Mr. Benjamin Bixby and Mr. Hezekiah Sabin and Mr. Ebenezer Green, all of said precinct, to require you to warn, or cause to be warned, all the inhabitants within your precinct to meet at the dwelling-house of Hezekiah Sabin in said precinct, on the 9th day of July . . . then and there for to choose a precinct clerk, and any business that shall be lawful and thought needful for the health of the precinct."

The first public meeting of the inhabitants north of Killingly was held according to this warrant, July 9, 1728. The number of residents within the society limits is not known. Its leading men were Sampson Howe, Simon Bryant, Joseph Cady, Henry Green and Benjamin Bixby. Richard Dresser, the first settler, was then in failing health and died a few days after this meeting. Samuel Converse, the first settler near Quinnatisset Hill, with four grown sons, was still active in public affairs. Sabin's house on the hill-top was deemed the most fitting rallying point for the new society. Rude bridle-paths from various neighborhoods led up to this bleak eminence. Its northern extremity was still heavily wooded. The ruins of the old wigwam once occupied by Quinnatisset's praying Indians, were still visible. Sabin's establishment comprised the entire settlement. A goodly number of the inhabitants gathered on this July afternoon to organize a religious society. Jonathan Clough was chosen moderator. "They then voted and chose Sampson Howe, clerk for said society." Messrs. Howe, Sabin and Bixby were chosen committee. It was then voted, To hire a minister to preach the gospel in said society, and to begin with us to preach the first Lord's Day in August next ensuing; also, that Mr. Wales should be invited to preach the gospel to us and to continue with us for the space of six months; also, That for the future, a warrant set up at the usual place of our meeting for public worship shall be accounted legal warning for said society. For reasons not specified, Simon Bryant, Henry Green, William Larned, Joseph Cady

and Thomas Whitmore entered "their dissent against the proceedings of the day."

Though the first act of the society was to establish religious worship, many other things were needful for "the health of the precinct." Its affairs were not yet settled upon a sound basis. The jurisdiction exercised by Killingly had never been authorized by the Government, and town officers in charge were scarcely legal and regular. Very few of the inhabitants had yet taken the freeman's oath, so that the privilege of suffrage was restricted to a few. The bounds of the society were not sufficiently definite. Inhabitants west of the Quinebaug, not included in any town, were anxious to be annexed to it. Attempts to vote in these "peculiars" and other inhabitants, occupied the second and third meetings of the society. The case of the former was referred to the General Assembly. "August 13, 1728, it was then put to vote, Whether every man that hath a house and land of his own, belonging to this society, shall have liberty to vote and act with us in all affairs relating to the settling the worship of God in said society, and it passed in the negative." Mr. Wales not being secured, Hezekiah Sabin and Uriah Horsmor were appointed to provide a minister, and Benjamin Bixby and Jonathan Clough, "to take advice of the neighboring ministers who we shall hire to preach the gospel with us."

The building a meeting-house was next brought under consideration. The minister procured held divine service in the house of Mr. Sabin. September 9, it was put to vote, Whether the society would ever build a meeting house, and it passed in the affirmative. It was then agreed by successive votes, That the meeting-house should be fifty feet long and forty feet wide and twenty-four feet stud, and that John Comings should be improved to be the master workman in hewing and framing—having five shillings a day and his victuals. The very important question, Where to set our meeting-house, was debated September 20, and it was voted to place it, "south side and near to the road that leads from John Cooper's to Benjamin Bixby's, right before the door of the house of Hezekiah Sabin, about twenty rods from said house, near where was an old wigwam." The site thus selected is near the centre of the present Thompson common. Nathaniel Merrill, John Wiley, Uriah and Jaazaniah Horsmor, Hezekiah Sabin and Benjamin Bixby, were then appointed "committee-men, to look after the affairs of building our meeting-house." It was voted, "To give every man that works about the meeting-house, three shillings per day, he finding himself; that every man allowed to hew timber shall have three and sixpence; that the oxen that shall goe to work about the meeting-house shall be allowed eighteen-pence per day; a horse that draweth, one shilling; for a cart, one shilling." The appointed committee had full



power to provide all things necessary for hewing, framing and covering, upon the society's charge.

Farther legislation in October, increased the powers and resources of the new society. The division line agreed upon by the inhabitants was ratified and confirmed, and liberty given them to embody in church estate. The country land west of the Quinebaug, bounded north by the colony line, west by Woodstock, and south by Pomfret, with all its inhabitants, was joined and annexed to the North Society of Killingly. Upon memorial of Benjamin Bixby, Hezekiah Sabin and Sampson Howe, it was granted by the Assembly, "That a yearly tax of ten shillings upon each and every hundred acres of land be levied on all the lands within their bounds, being y<sup>e</sup> bounds of said North Society, viz., north on Connecticut line, south on division line and Pomfret, east on Rhode Island line, and west on Woodstock. . . tax to continue for four years . . . society committee empowered with authority to use the money in building meeting-house and settling an orthodox minister . . . non-residents to be apprized of the tax two months before execution." "For the preventing law-suits and accommodating differences," the Assembly had also granted to Peter Aspinwall, Benjamin Bixby and the rest of the proprietors of Killingly, all the tract of land northward between old and new colony lines, except what had been confirmed to Massachusetts claimers or previously granted by Connecticut, and needful equivalents . . . upon this condition—that Killingly proprietors should not molest nor disturb any of the claimers on that part of the land which by the surveys were extended south of Woodward's and Saffrey's line." The Honorable Timothy Pierce and Joseph Adams, Esq., were appointed committee to lay out, settle and ascertain the lands of claimers and the remainder, and improve a surveyor if need be, to assist therein.

The North Society, encouraged by addition of territory, the generous land-tax granted and the prospect of settled government, pursued the work of building with great animation and alacrity. The people's hearts were stirred up and they willingly aided, as if with one heart and soul, in constructing this first tabernacle. In all parts of the large society, men were working upon the meeting-house. Bryant, Wilson, Cady and Whitmore in the South-neighborhood; Howe, Shapley, Crosby, Jewett, Ellithorp and the Horsmors from the French River valley; Wiley, Starr, Ellis, Atwell, Pudney, Coats and the Bixbys from Brandy Hill and vicinity; Henry Green and his eight sons from Pottaquatic; Samuel Converse and his four from the Quinнатisset farm and meadows; Moffat, Munyan and Joslin from the borders of Rhode Island; Johnson, Brown and others from Lake Chaubongagum; John Hascall from the extreme northwest corner of the precinct—were all

engaged in felling, hewing, or hauling timber for this much-desired house of worship. Young Jacob Dresser, though but eighteen years of age, did his part with cart and oxen. Even the "peculers" west of the Quinebaug—Jonathan Eaton, John Dwight and Penuel Child—though so recently admitted to the society were ready and eager to share in the work. The only discordant voices in the community were those of Samuel Morris, William Chandler, John Corbin, Samuel Fuller and Christopher Peak—residents in the northwest of the parish and members of the church in Woodstock—who declared their inability to attend divine service at such a distance, and formally entered their dissent "against the meeting-house being raised before the door of Hezekiah Sabin's house, where it was agreed upon to be set."

With this exception, all was harmony. No meeting house in the county was built with such apparent joyfulness. The little word "our," prefixed to all meeting-house votes, pleasantly indicates the personal interest and proprietorship felt by the whole society. An acre of land including the appointed site was given to the society by Hezekiah Sabin, and in spite of rough ways and the lateness of the season the work went on so rapidly that on November 15, the people were called together, "To consider how and in what method we shall proceed in order for making preparation for the raising our meeting-house." It was voted, "That every man in said society shall have liberty to bring in provisions and drink, what may be thought his proportion." John Dwight, Benjamin Bixby, Hezekiah Sabin, Edward Converse, Jonathan Clough and Sampson Howe were chosen to take care to provide for raising, and under their supervision the work was faithfully accomplished, and the frame raised before the setting in of winter. "Liberty to bring in provisions and drink" for this joyful occasion was so freely exercised, that John Wiley and John Dwight were directed, "To take particular account of what every man brought . . . the over-plush to pay the 'rerages of hiring ministers." Provision was rated—pork at six-pence per pound; beef at four-pence; mutton, four-pence; suet, eight-pence; sugar, twelve-pence; butter, one shilling; turnips, one and six-pence per bushel; wheat, eight shillings a bushel; rye at six, Indian corn at four; cabbages at three-pence per head.

At a society-meeting, December 13, Sampson Howe was again chosen clerk; Henry Green, Sampson Howe and Hezekiah Sabin, committee; Urian Horsmor, collector. A committee was chosen to see "if they can agree with workmen, and also to provide boards, clap-boards and shingles sufficient to cover our meeting-house." Urian Horsmor was made choice of "to seek a minister to preach with us till the first of March next coming." Messrs. Eliot, Coolidge, Hale and Howlet were nominated; Mr. Coolidge secured. January 20, 1729, Ensign Green,

Jonathan Eaton, Joseph Cady, John Dwight and Edward Converse were appointed a committee to "agree with a workman to finish all the outside work belonging to our meeting-house." It was voted, "That this committee shall make Woodstock meeting-house their pattern to go by in letting out our meeting-house to any workman to cover and enclose, and do all the outside work as to carpenter and joiner work, accepting what said committee shall judge superfluous in said house." The house thus patterned, was Woodstock's second church edifice, whose fluted pillars and pilasters were quite beyond the means of the younger society. The previous committee was ordered to bring the boards, shingles and clap-boards provided, with nails sufficient, to the meeting-house by the first of March, so that the house could be covered and inclosed by the last of June. It was voted, "That for the future, every man that shall cart one thousand of boards from Green's Mill to the meeting-house shall have ten shillings money for the same."

The covering of the house was completed within the time specified, and on August 1, 1729, the society met for the first time in their meeting-house. The Rev. Mr. Coolidge had during this interval declined a call to settlement, and Marston Cabot of Salem was preaching on trial. A committee was now appointed to treat with the latter gentleman about hiring him for some time longer as he and they could agree. A rate of £150 was ordered to defray the expense of covering: money to be gathered from the land-tax in the coming year was "to be improved in procuring hinges and latches for our meeting-house doors, and for glazing." Penuel Child was employed as glazier.

October 16, it was put to vote, "Whether Mr. Cabot shall be the minister of this society," and it passed in the affirmative. It was then voted, to give Mr. Cabot eighty pounds salary for the first year, and so to add five pounds per year, till it comes to a hundred pounds per year, and that to be his stated salary. Also, to give him two hundred pounds settlement, paying one hundred pounds the first year and fifty pounds per year, the second and third years. Jonathan Eaton, John Dwight and Sampson Howe were chosen to treat with Mr. Cabot, and entreat his acceptance. At the same time, James Wilson, Benjamin Bixby and Jonathan Clough were directed to go to the Rev. Mr. Fisk, "as occasion shall be, for advice, in order to have the gospel ordinances settled in this society." Mr. Cabot, after considering the matter till December 4, thus replied:—

"To the inhabitants of the North Society of Killingly. Gentlemen—

I doubt not but you are sensible ye price of such things as are necessary for the support and comfort of human life is daily rising, and there is the prospect of dearer living still. I trust you are all agreed y<sup>t</sup> a minister of Christ ought to have an honorable maintenance, suitable to his sacred character and station, that he may not be forced to entangle himself with the affairs of this life; and I make no question but you are heartily willing to communicate to



Him that teacheth in all good things, for so hath the Lord ordained y<sup>t</sup> they which preach ye Gosple should live of ye Gosple.

Persuading myself therefore, and depending on this, that as your outward circumstances increase and grow better, you will proportionably and cheerfully contribute to the bettering ye condition and circumstances of him y<sup>t</sup> labors among you in word and doctrine, I accept of your call and invitation to settle among you in the great work of ye ministry; provided, you fulfil the three following articles, viz. :—

1. That you answer ye £200 settlement you have offered me, to Mr. Cooper and his wife, who have engaged to let me have their place for the consideration of three hundred pounds.

2. That you always keep up the credit of ye salary you have proposed in your call.

3. That you bring me a sufficiency of cord-wood for my own use in the season of it.

Thus requesting an interest in your addresses to Heaven, and assuring you I shall bear you upon my heart before God continually, and wishing you all temporal happiness, but especially y<sup>t</sup> your souls may prosper and be in health,

I subscribe,

Yours for Jesus' sake,

MARSTON CABOT."

Upon the reception of this letter the society at once empowered Jonathan Russell, John Dwight and Sampson Howe to give bonds to Mr. and Mrs. Cooper for the payment of the two hundred pounds, and pledged themselves to keep up the credit of the salary and find and bring sufficient cord-wood. A rate of eighty pounds "out of our estates for the payment of Mr. Cabot's salary this present year" was immediately granted. This matter being settled, the society next began to consider about preparing for an ordination. The meeting-house, though now used for religious and business meetings, was but a covered frame with temporary floor and seats. A committee was appointed to agree with a workman to build a pulpit and a platform for the pulpit to stand on, and a deacons' seat, but no further improvements were attempted during the winter. The last Wednesday in February, 1730, was appointed for ordination. The formation of the church, a month previous, is thus recorded by Mr. Cabot :—

KILLINGLY, *North Society*, Jan. 28, 1730. This day was kept as a day of fasting and prayer, to humble ourselves before God for our past trespasses, and to implore the divine blessing on us and all our concerns, more especially on the solemn transactions that are before us. The Rev. Mr. Throop of Woodstock, made the first prayer in both exercises. The Rev. Mr. Williams of Pomfret preached in the forenoon from Psalms cxxii: 6; the Rev. Mr. Fisk of Killingly, in the afternoon, from II. Chron. xxx: 8, and before the assembly were dismissed, we were incorporated and formed into a distinct church, by having the church covenant read, and owning our consent to it."

The persons signing were—

Marston Cabot, pastor-elect.

Samuel Converse.

James Wilson.

John Wiley.

Benjamin Bixby.

Israel Joslin.

Sampson Howe.

John Russell.

Jonathan Clough.

Nathaniel Merrill.

Hezekiah Sabin.

Edward Converse.

Nathaniel Johnson.

Ivory Upham.

Robert Plank.

John Bowers.

Ephraim Guile.

Henry Green.

Benjamin Pudney.

Comfort Starr.

John Barrett.

Richard Bloss.

Jonathan Eaton.

David Shapley.

Thomas Whittemore, Jr.

Thomas Converse.

Eleazer Green.

Samuel Narramore.



The covenant thus adopted was evangelical in its spirit and scriptural in its main features, though not explicitly making regeneration a condition of church-membership, its subscribers engaging—

“Art 4. To receive all such persons into full communion as are orthodox in their faith, free from scandal in their lives, able to examine themselves and discern the Lord’s Body; and also to rest satisfied with such admittance of adult persons as is performed by the pastor’s examination of their knowledge and experience of the principles and practices of religion.”

Their high regard for the ministerial office was further shown in the succeeding article, in which they covenanted, “to obey him that is by our present voluntary election, or those that may hereafter be set over us in the Lord, as such that watch over our souls, and whom we shall always account worthy of a gospel support and maintenance; as also to adhere to a pious and able ministry in this church, laboring in a way of joint concurrence with him or them, to his or their conscientious discretion, exerting the ministerial authority committed to them to recover and uphold the vigorous and impartial administration of discipline among us.” Children of parents “owning the covenant,” were admitted to baptism.

February 25, 1730, was the day appointed for ordination. This important event is thus described by Mr. Cabot: “The Rev. Mr. Throop of Woodstock began with prayer. The Rev. Mr. Fisk of Killingly preached from Acts xxvi: 18 and 19 verses. The Rev. Mr. Coit of Plainfield gave the charge, the Rev. Mr. Hale of Ashford prayed. The Rev. Mr. Williams of Pomfret gave y<sup>e</sup> right hand of fellowship; then the twenty-third Psalm was sung and the congregation were dismissed by pronouncing the blessing.” A month later, March 25, “after seeking to Heaven for direction,” Jonathan Eaton and Benjamin Bixby were chosen deacons of the church by a majority of votes, and accepted that service.

Very little is known of Mr. Cabot previous to his settlement, save that he was then twenty-six years of age, and a graduate of Harvard College in 1724. According to tradition, he was descended from the famous discoverer, Sebastian Cabot, whose name he gave to one of his sons. Soon after his ordination, Mr. Cabot married Mary Dwight, a daughter of the much-tried pastor of Woodstock, and established himself upon the homestead bought of John Cooper, about a mile southwest of the meeting-house. This land was part of the Quinnotisset Farm laid out to John Gore in 1684, and was bisected by Woodward’s and Saffery’s so-called boundary line.

## VII.

LAND DISPUTES. THOMPSON PARISH CONFIRMED. SCHOOL DISTRICTS SET OFF. MEETING-HOUSE COMPLETED. CONTROVERSY WITH SAMUEL MORRIS.

WHILE the north society of Killingly was thus harmoniously settling religious worship, its territory was still in conflict. Killingly, having obtained after so long a struggle a grant of this land, was by no means disposed to fulfill the required condition of not molesting its non-resident claimants, but resolutely asserted her purpose to hold as her own property that part of Thompson's land which lay south of Woodward's and Saffery's line. Surveyor Conant, when employed by Samuel Morris as agent for Thompson and Wolcott, to re-measure the land accruing to those gentlemen, found three hundred and twenty acres encroached upon and held by Simon Bryant, Robert Plank and Nathaniel Merrill. The Collins tract, made over to Captain John King of Taunton, had also been invaded. Messrs. Pierce and Adams, appointed by the General Assembly to lay out and settle these lands and "ascertain about claimer's lapping on their neighbors," were greatly embarrassed by these conflicting claims—"the town of Killingly altogether denying that Thompson or Collins have any land to ye south of Woodward's and Saffery's line, it being granted to ye town of Killingly by this Court before ye agreement between the two governments"—and unable to proceed in the affair. Upon the representation of Samuel Morris to the General Assembly, May 8, 1729, "that Thompson had not yet obtained his patent, and that his land had been encroached upon," it was ordered, "That three hundred and seventy acres be laid out elsewhere as equivalent," and Roger Wolcott, Jos. Whiting, Ebenezer Marsh, Benjamin Bushnell and Richard Abbe, appointed commissioners to investigate the whole affair. These gentlemen reporting favorably to the claimants, the Assembly, October 29, 1729, enacted the following:—"Explanation of an Act passed in this Assembly, May 13th, 1708, granting the township of Kellingly:—

Whereas the said act granting said township describes the bounds of said township to be, northerly on the line of the Massachusetts, south on Plainfield bounds settled May 11th, 1699, east on Rhode Island, and west on Ashawang; and it is expressly said that the township being by estimation eight or nine miles in length: And, whereas, upon settling the line of the Massachusetts with this Colony by agreement, about ten years after the said grant to Kellingly, the said line is now run and ascertained about eight or ten miles north of their ancient claimed and reputed line, and above eighteen miles north of the said north bounds of Plainfield; and hence may contentions and troubles arise upon this question whether the said grant to Kellingly shall be construed

to extend to the Massachusetts line, as it is now settled, or only to the ancient claimed and reputed bounds of the Massachusetts, at the south bounds of Woodstock, which is called Woodward's and Saffery's Line, which contentions to prevent: This Assembly have considered that, whereas the line of the Massachusetts, as it is now settled by agreement, was not known nor agreed to be the line till about ten years after the said grant to Killingly, and instead of being eight or nine, is about eighteen or nineteen miles north of the said north bounds of Plainfield; and that at the time of the said grant to Killingly, and long before, the Massachusetts had claimed their bounds upon Connecticut to be a line on the south bounds of Woodstock, called Woodward's and Saffery's Line, and had then settled the town of Woodstock on that line, which town of Woodstock was then under the government of the Massachusetts and accounted to be within the same; and that the mensuration of eight or nine miles from the north bounds of Plainfield will well correspond with the said ancient claimed and reputed line of the Massachusetts, at the south bounds of Woodstock; whereas, to measure to the line since settled by agreement is twice as far: It is therefore hereupon considered, resolved and declared by this General Assembly, that the Massachusetts line mentioned in the said grant of Killingly is no other but the ancient claimed and reputed line of the Massachusetts, called Woodward's and Saffery's Line, which is at the south bounds of Woodstock; and that the same is always hereafter so to be understood and construed."

Thus Killingly, after all her efforts and temporary possession, was again cut off from the land north of her, and the inhabitants of that land debarred from town privileges and reduced to their former territorial condition. The setting up of schools and laying out of roads was impossible under such circumstances, and nothing was accomplished for several years by the North Society, but the settlement of its minister and erection of a house of worship. A meeting of its inhabitants was held, May 18, 1730, to consider their difficulties, and it was decided to petition the Assembly, "That the society supposed to be the North Society of the town of Killingly should be erected into a township, or if that was not thought expedient, to establish the bounds of said society according as it was intended by us when first granted." Hezekiah Sabin was chosen to present this petition to the Assembly, and so forcibly represented the difficulties under which the society labored, "by reason of the explanatory act by which the north bounds of Killingly are restrained to Woodward's and Saffery's line, so that the line stated as the south line of the Parish is but a little southward of said Woodward's and Saffery's line," that it was resolved by the Assembly, May 30, 1730:—

"That all the lands lying north of the said Woodward's and Saffery's line between the lines of the Colony of Rhode Island and the town of Woodstock, up to the dividant line between Massachusetts and this Colony, shall be, and they are hereby added to the said North Society in Killingly, and all parish privileges are hereby granted to the inhabitants dwelling within the limits aforesaid, that is to say—south of the Massachusetts line (as it is now stated), west of Rhode Island line, north of the line heretofore made the dividant line between North and South Societies in Killingly, and east of east line of Woodstock."

The society, thus confirmed and re-established, was then re-named—Thompson—in honor of the English proprietor whose claim was so offensive to Killingly.

Thompson Parish, when thus stated and established, contained between forty and fifty families, but was still in a very unsettled condition. It had no roads regularly laid out, no military company, and neither schools for its children nor pounds for its cattle. About half of its unoccupied land was claimed by non-residents; the remainder, despite enactments and injunctions, was laid out by the proprietors of Killingly, and distributed among her inhabitants. The cheapness and accessibility of land attracted many settlers. Samuel Narramore of Boston bought of Philip McIntyre sixty acres north of Wolcott's line, in 1729. Much of the Wolcott land was sold out to previous residents, Hezekiah Sabin buying the northwest corner. The Converse brothers, Edward, Samuel, Josiah, as they settled in life, purchased farms of Wolcott. John Russel added Wolcott land to his farm, and the widow of John Cooper, after selling her homestead to Marston Cabot, bought land of Wolcott. Ephraim Guile bought two hundred acres of land, with dwelling-house and orchard, of Samuel Converse. Sampson Howe sold land on the French River, beginning at a ledge of rocks, "Nathaniel Crosby's northeast corner," to Isaac Stone. Land west of the Quinebaug was sold by Woodstock proprietors. Large tracts were purchased by John Post and Thomas Fuller. Half of the Rev. Josiah Dwight's land was made over to his son, John, the remainder to his son-in-law, Penuel Child, who both were prominent in Thompson Parish. Mr. Dwight, himself, after a brief sojourn in Dedham, settled with his children in this new parish, and passed, it is hoped, "a sedate and quiet" old age on the wild land whose purchase had involved him in such difficulties.

The first act of the inhabitants of Thompson Parish was to organize a military company. Sampson Howe was chosen captain, Hezekiah Sabin, lieutenant; John Dwight, ensign—and, thenceforth, the prescribed "trainings" were duly observed on Thompson Hill. A meeting "to consider about granting of a school or schools in said parish," was held, January 15, 1731, when it was agreed, "That there should be four schools kept in this parish, and the school-master to be removed into four quarters of this parish." Jonathan Clough, Joseph Cady, Penuel Child and John Wiley—from the east, south, west and north—were then appointed a committee, "to divide this parish into four parts in order for the benefit and advantig of having their children educated each quarter in reading and wrighting and sifering." Instruction in *spelling* was deemed quite superfluous.

The appointed committee, February 17 :—

"Made report as followeth; that is to say: First, ye north est part to begin at Edward Mynyans, and so to tak in King's farm and Squire Wolcott's farm, so far as it is inhabited, and Lieut. Sabin's, and so all that fall to ye northeast and north of sd plantations. Secondly, the northwest quarter to begin at



Cooper's, and so to take in John Russel's farm and Nathaniel Johnson's and Stephen Cummins', and from thence to ye Widow Dresser's, and so all that fall north and north-west of sd plantations. Thirdly, ye southwest part to begin at Cooper's, above mentioned, and so a straight line so far as to take Mr. Simon Bryant into ye southwest quarter, and so all ye inhabitants belonging to ye southwest of said line in said society to belong to ye southwest quarter, and all the remaining inhabitants in said society to belong to ye south-east quarter."

These "quarters," it will be seen, differed greatly in size, the dimensions being regulated by the distribution of inhabitants. It was voted to accept the division as reported; also, "that to ye inhabitants belonging to each quarter, having legal warning for to meet together, that the major part of them that shall meet shall have liberty for to erect a school-house in their quarter." Committees were chosen in each section to warn the inhabitants to meet together to agree where to set their school-house, viz.: Comfort Starr and Nathaniel Brown for the northeast quarter; Christopher Peak and Isaac Jewett for the north-west, James Cady and Samuel Cutler for the southwest and Thomas Whitmore and Henry Green for the southeast. School-houses were built as soon as possible, and the management of school affairs was left chiefly in the hands of each division—the school money being "equally divided between each school, according to the number of families that sent their children to school."

The completion of the meeting-house was next provided for. It was voted, "That John Wiley and Sampson Howe should be the men to lay the meeting-house floor; also, to give Jacob Bixby after the rate of three pounds p<sup>r</sup> thousand for five hundred pitch-pine boards that are good." A body of seats was next ordered, "after the form of the body of seats in Woodstock meeting-hous." Simon Bryant, Henry Green and John Wiley were appointed in charge of this work, and directed, "to git the stuff for the body of seats in our meeting-house of good sound oak timber." It was also agreed, "That Henry Green, Jun. should provide plank for seats for our meeting-house, at 7s. per hundred, and the slit-work for the seats at 4s. 6d. per hundred, and plank for the heads at 9s. per hundred of good white-oak timber. "Seats and floor having been finished after a year's delay, the question of pews was next in order. Seventeen pew-spots had been reserved against the walls of the house, and, September 1, 1732, the society met to consider some regular method of disposition, and to give them to the persons they most properly belong unto. This delicate point was settled by a committee of nomination—Captain Howe, Simon Bryant and John Wiley naming those thought worthy of this honor, and each nominee in turn being voted upon by the whole society. The persons thus selected as pew-owners were, Henry Green, Simon Bryant, David Shapley, John Russel, Captain Howe, Lieutenant Sabin, Joseph Cady,

Comfort Stair, Nathaniel Wight, James Wilson, Urian Horsmor, John Younglove, John Wiley, Mrs. Dresser and her son, Jacob, Mr. Dwight and his son, John. Deacons Eaton and Bixby were also allowed one pew "for their wives and families to sett in." It was then voted and agreed upon by ye society, "That each person that hath a pew granted him shall take it for his seat. and shall take in as many of their family as can conveniently set therein; also, that each person shall finish the meeting-house up to the lower girth, and maintain the glass belonging to his pew." A "ministerial pew on the north side of ye house adjoining ye minister's stayrs," was also ordered.

February 2, 1733, the sum of five pounds was granted to Hezekiah Goff, "for to build ye ministerial pew in our meeting house, his finding of boards and all things necessary for said work, and to seal the house unto ye window and case ye window." It was also voted, "To finish ye meeting-house with lath, and plaster with lime. Seven shillings for making the rods for the Cannopee in our meeting-house, and eight shillings for the twelve pounds of iron made into these rods, were allowed at this meeting. March 9, an attempt was made "to asseartain ye place where each person may build his pew," but none was settled but that of Mr. Dwight and his son, John, "joyning ye Reverend Mr. Cabot's pew in ye northwest corner of ye meeting-house." April 9, it was voted and agreed, "To give unto Hezekiah Goffe, forty-one pound ten shillings to build two pair of framed stairs and lay ye gallery floors and face ye fore-seats round with good, handsome panel work, and find all materials and provisions necessary for said work, and to be done workman-like, as it shall be judged by indefrent workmen; said Goff is also to cart ye bordes to ye meeting-house." This work was accepted on the 4th of March following—"provided ye said Goff will line the inside of said facing, ye society finding boards sufficient." Captain Howe, Urian Horsmor and Thomas Converse were then chosen to agree with workmen to build seats in the gallery, copying, as usual, "ye form of Woodstock seats in their gallery," and John Wiley ordered to provide boards, planks and timber "fitting, suitable and sufficient for building five seats in ye front, and four seats in each side gallery." These being erected by the close of another twelve-month, and suitable allowance made for nails, planks and carting—the meeting-house, after six and a half years' labor was fairly accomplished, and on March 18, 1735, the society met to arrange its seating. Joseph Cady, Jun., Henry Green, Simon Bryant and Urian Horsmor were chosen committee for that purpose. Their rule to go by was simply, "computing all the charge of settling the gospel in said society, having respect, also, to age." Messrs. Cady and Green were also appointed "to take a deed of Lieutenant Sabin of a certain piece of land round

about our meeting hous, as is already bounded for the Society's use." "A peace of land," near the French River, a mile or more southwest of the meeting-house, was also given by David Shapley "for a burying-place for said Society."

The liberal land tax allowed by the Assembly enabled this society to meet its expenses with comparative ease, though some assessments were found needful. The collecting this tax was a matter of some delay and difficulty. Non-resident proprietors found it extremely burdensome. Committees were more than once chosen "to discourse with Captain Howe, and see how far he hath proceeded in gathering the land-tax." February, 1733, Henry Green, Jun., and Ivory Upham were directed, "to cast up Captain Howe's account, which he brought in respecting ye land-tax." This committee reported that the money already received amounted to £438 17s., and that £108 3s. were still due. Penuel Childs was appointed to collect this remainder, and it was further agreed, "That each person that hath not paid the land-tax in full, according to the grant of the Assembly, A. D. 1728, shall be prosecuted by the committee in the law. The gradual depreciation of currency and consequent rise in the price of "necessaries for the upholding of human life," made it needful to provide for the keeping up the credit of Mr. Cabot's salary according to agreement. Twenty pounds additional were granted in 1734 and 1735, but this being opposed by Christopher Peak and other remote residents, four contributions were allowed him in 1736, to be taken "up once a quarter." The stipulated supply of wood was usually provided by one individual, at the cost of the society, but in 1736, it was agreed to procure it by each man cutting one day. January 9, was the day appointed to cut and cart this wood, each man not appearing on said day to forfeit three shillings. The first work of the society after completing its meeting-house, was to order a capacious pound "worthy of that edifice." December 26, 1735, it was put to vote, "Whether the society would build a good, substantial pound of thirty feet square, with good white-oak posts, with six rails and a good cap on the top of the posts, with a good gate well hanged with good iron hinges, and a good lock and kee, with a good staple and hasp," and it passed in the affirmative. A suitable sum was allowed Jacob Dresser for building this pound, he finding and providing all things necessary. The pound was set near the northeast corner of the meeting house, and Hezekiah Sabin duly installed as its keeper.

Thus, within eight years of its organization, the North Society of Killingly was well settled and established, with minister, meeting-house, military company, schools and pound, and was in very thriving and prosperous circumstances. Nearly all its residents were now admitted

inhabitants, and allowed the "privilege of voting in any of the prudentials therein." The Rev. Mr. Cabot was greatly beloved by his people, and his preaching so acceptable that his first Fast and Thanksgiving sermons were deemed worthy of publication. Mr. Dwight, too, proved himself a valuable member of the society, ready to bear his part of charges and "do service by preaching." Mr. Cabot was like Mr. Dwight, an advocate of a "regular method in singing," and his church is believed to have been one of the first in Windham County to employ a stated "querister," Mr. Pennel Child being appointed in 1742 to that service.

The remarkable harmony enjoyed by Thompson Parish during this period was only interrupted by an unfortunate controversy with Mr. Samuel Morris, the builder of the first bridge across the Quinebaug, agent for Thompson and other non-residents, and nominal "governor" of the remaining Nipmucks. Mr. Morris had settled on a tract of land, bought of Governor Dudley before its assumption by Connecticut and united with the church in Woodstock, and for many years was allowed to worship there without molestation, but after the erection of Thompson Parish he was bound by Colony laws to do his part in establishing and maintaining religious worship in that society. The heavy land-tax first assessed was paid by him without remonstrance, but when the society committee proceeded to call upon him as a resident for the minister's salary and ordinary expenses—Mr. Morris demurred. All his associations and interests were with the Massachusetts Colony, and at his time of life he could not think of leaving the church of his fathers to worship with a new people at so great a distance. To pay for religious services which he could not attend seemed to him a great injustice, but the collector of Thompson Parish, unmoved by his protestations and refusal, took forcible possession of sufficient goods to satisfy his demand. The only remedy for this grievance was from the General Assembly, and thither Mr. Morris resorted, May 13, 1731, with his neighbors, William Chandler, Edward Bugbee and others, showing:—

"That we were laid out to Thompson Parish; live seven miles away; way very rough; have never attended service there, and never shall; live some miles nearer Woodstock, and have attended there till last winter, when we, with some others, obtained a young gentleman to preach with us, and cheerfully went through with the great charge thereof, that so our families might have the benefit of Christian instruction, and not live like heathen; that we have paid a full tax and helped build a meeting-house in Thompson, which house does not accommodate us, being very much one side of the parish, and pray to be excused from paying anything more."

This request was refused, on the ground that Thompson had not been properly notified. In October, Mr. Morris further represented to the Assembly:—

"That he could not, even in summer, attend worship in Thompson with



any tolerable convenience, nor in the winter without extreme peril; that he had helped contribute generously to the meeting-house in Woodstock, and paid charges there; that he had kept up bridges and roads to great public benefit, yet, notwithstanding all these public services, the North Society of Killingly now came upon him for great sums of money to support the charges of said society, when it was impossible for him to secure any benefit, they having placed their meeting-house so far east that, in process of time, it would be inevitably necessary to build another."

Mr. Simon Bryant and Joseph Cady were summoned to answer these charges, and a slight abatement ordered. Encouraged by this, Mr. Morris continued his pleas in October, 1732, insisting: "That to be obliged to travel such a distance over bad ways to Thompson meeting-house would have a tendency to discourage religious inclinations; that a great part of holy time would be spent in very servile labor, both to man and beast, by the practice, and that the great public charges he had borne in making bridges ought to exempt him from further payment." Again were Bryant and Cady summoned, and having considered the circumstances, the Assembly decided, that though the attendance of Mr. Morris upon public worship in Thompson would be "very difficult in the winter part of the year, yet it is not farther than many people live from the place of public worship in other parishes, and he must therefore pay half-rate."

Against this decision, Mr. Morris most indignantly protested. He could not go to Thompson even in summer, because of mountains and rocks to go over and many swamps to go through. He had a very great regard for the excellent Mr. Cabot, and would like to sit under his ministry but it was not possible, and were there no other place of worship he should count it a less evil to stay at home and read good books than to go through so much difficulty and hazard to attend at Thompson Parish. The General Court says, "others go as far to church, but"—continues Mr. Morris—"I durst challenge the whole Government to find another person in like circumstances in two respects. I. In not being annexed with Woodstock to the Bay. II. In being annexed to Thompson, where I have not, nor cannot receive any benefit, and count it very hard to be annexed to a parish, to do deeds of charity and maintain the gospel where it is impossible for me to attend, and if I cannot be allowed, with my family, to worship out of Connecticut allow me to hire preaching in my own house, with those of my neighbors in like circumstances, that I, with those on my farm, may pay my ministerial dues where we can have the Word preached to us."

Despite the urgency of this plea and many following, the Government persistently refused to release Mr. Morris from his parochial obligations. Annexation to some accessible *Connecticut* parish would have been acceded, but to remit lawful "ministerial dues" in favor of *Massachusetts* was a highth of magnanimity not then attained by the

Connecticut Assembly. That Thompson authorities should refrain from collecting this tax was equally out of the question. Laws they supposed were made to be enforced, and the half-rate allowed must be secured to the uttermost farthing. The character and standing of Mr. Morris only made the duty more imperative, and thus the young parish was involved in a controversy with its most distinguished inhabitant. Again and again the people were called together, "to consider how to proceed in our difficulties with Samuel Morris." Simon Bryant, Joseph Cady, Sampson Howe and other leading men were sent successively to represent the society, and answer the memorials. Attorneys were employed to plead their cause at great expense, and so unwelcome was the service of collecting this obnoxious tax that the society was obliged to enact, "That every person chosen collector and refusing to serve should be prosecuted in the law." As Mr. Morris refused to pay, his goods or lands must be distrained, and so the contest went on year after year, to the great annoyance and expense of both parties. At length, after Mr. Morris had connected himself with a new church in Dudley, much nearer his residence than Woodstock, he again petitioned, May, 1742, "that he might be exempted from paying parish rates to Thompson, where he never had and never could attend worship, and be allowed to pay where he did attend, at Dudley, and had helped build a meeting-house there and maintain a minister; being sensible that Thompson was more able to maintain their own minister than the memorialist to help maintain *two*, and for him to pay so much money to Thompson for nothing was more than God does, or more than man can, reasonably, require of their fellow-creatures." Release from the payment of country taxes and *one-half* of all parish taxes, provided he maintained a good and sufficient bridge over Quinebaug River and allowed a free road through his farm over this bridge, was thereupon granted. No further exemption was ever attained, but Mr. Morris was compelled through life to submit to this unjust taxation. His son, Samuel, established himself in business as a "trader," apparently upon the family homestead, buying up produce and exchanging it for goods in Boston, and was largely patronized by residents of Woodstock, Dudley and the west part of Thompson.

## VIII.

ROADS LAID OUT. NEW INHABITANTS. THOMPSON LAND  
CONTROVERSY.

THOMPSON, when thus happily established, was still deficient in traveling facilities. Road-making was not a parochial prerogative, and Killingly's town authority was doubtful and intermittent. One of the first acts of that town after the annexation of the land north of her, was to choose a committee "to go to the parish of Thompson, and to take a view and see what ways they need to go to their meeting-house, and lay out what they think fit, and make return of their doings." The gentlemen selected—Isaac Cutler, James Leavens, and Sampson Howe—found their task not an easy one. The large parish, with its fifty families, had not a road laid out in it, save the wretched old country gangways leading to Boston and Hartford. Crooked bridle-paths winding around among "rocks, mountains and miry swamps" had been trodden out by its inhabitants. The soil was stony and hard to be worked, and the people so scattered that almost every family required an especial "way" of its own. The committee, however, set themselves sedulously about the work, and in process of time completed "views" and a number of surveys. The first road reported, October 4, 1732, appropriately accommodated the earliest settlers, beginning on the west side of Quinebaug River, near Mrs. Dresser's, "and then running over said river," (probably on John Dwight's bridge at the present crossing-place east of West Thompson village), and on between Captain Howe's house and barn to the French Rivêr, thence down and over it and on past the burying-ground, David Shapley's and Mr. Cabot's, and "so as the road is now trod to y<sup>e</sup> meeting-house." No other road was completed until 1735, when a committee "chosen to view y<sup>e</sup> circumstances in y<sup>e</sup> quarter of Green's at Thompson," laid out a road from Thomas Whitmore's in the southeast section, which meandered around in the most bewildering manner to houses and pastures of Phinehas, Ebenezer and Henry Green, crossing bridges and upper and lower ford-ways of the Five-Mile River, passing Merrill's barn and improved land "on to the old road over Quinnatisset Brook," and so following the same till they "turn out to come into the country road, southwest corner of Hezekiah Sabin's little orchard, fore side of y<sup>e</sup> meeting-house." Two years later, a road was laid out from Sabin's bridge, below the Great Falls of the Quinebaug, to Thompson meeting-house, accommodating Deacon Eaton, Captain Joseph Cady and others in that remote locality, and

intersecting the path by which "Simon Bryant already travelth from his own dwelling-house to Thompson meeting-house."

These roads, when opened, were found quite insufficient. A large part of the parish was yet unaccommodated. When the cherished meeting-house was fairly completed, cries for better ways to it arose from every quarter. Moffatt, from, "the edge of Rhode Island," asked for a road past Timothy Green's to the meeting-house; Joseph Munyan desired one "for the convennency of his neighborhood." Another road was asked from the Quinebaug, past Jewett's to Ellithorp's bridge over the French River, "where it would be most convenient for that neighborhood to go to Thompson meeting-house." "A considerable number of nabors" wished a bridle-road laid out from James Fuller's west of the Quinebaug, to Thompson meeting-house. Nathaniel Merrill and Robert Plank required a road for their especial accommodation. Individuals as well as neighborhoods were clamorous in importunity. A committee, called out to inquire into the circumstances of Squire Hascall on Dudley line, and furnish a road for him to travel to meeting on, found twelve pairs of bars intervening between his house and any traveled way. John Corbin, William Alton, Alpheus Converse, Ephraim Guile, Israel Joslin and Amos Bixby, each asked for a separate way to enable him to go to meeting. The only apparent use for a road in those days was "to travel to Thompson meeting-house" upon. No petitioner hinted at any other end or object save Captain William Chandler, from Woodstock line, who was so secular as to ask for a road allowing him "to do business in Killingly as well as attend meeting in Thompson." These innumerable petitions were received by Killingly with the most exemplary patience. So that Thompson but acknowledged her authority, she seemed heedless of expense or trouble. Every petitioner was accorded a way, however distant and difficult, to his beloved meeting-house—though in self-preservation she was finally compelled to enact, "That for the future every person that shall move to this town to have any way altered or removed, it shall be done at the petitioner's cost and charge." Under this provision, by persistent efforts, the people of Thompson were in time provided with suitable and convenient roads to their meeting-house from all parts of the parish.

The first interment recorded in the burial-ground given by David Shapley, was that of Captain Sampson Howe, who died in 1736, and was buried with military honors. He left a large estate to his widow and sons. Mrs. Howe had half the house and a proportionate share of land and furniture. Should she marry again like most widows of that day, eighty pounds were allowed her, and in case she out-lived her second husband she was to return to the house if she pleased, and "her son Sampson to take good care of her." Captain Howe left stock



valued at £236 ; beds and bedding, £92 ; clothes, £45 ; armor, £25 ; books, £8 ; linen, £12 ; brass, £13 ; pewter, £11 ; iron, £8 ; glass, £1 ; earthenware, 8s. ; wooden-ware, 19s. : two negroes, £200. The woman Leah was left to his son Sampson ; Cesar, the man-servant, to Perley. Sampson Howe purchased land west of Killingly Hill and removed to the south parish ; Perley settled as minister in Dudley, Mass.

The captaincy of the company was filled successively by Joseph Cady and John Dwight. The former was for several years clerk of the society. Jacob Dresser, the first male born within the limits of Thompson, was now one of its most active citizens, buying much land and filling many town offices. In 1741, he was chosen society clerk, and retained in office many years. William Larned, after some years' residence in Sutton, returned with seven sons to his former home in Thompson. Henry Green, Sen., in 1733, gave farms in the region of Pottaquatic to his sons, Henry, Seth, Amos, Timothy and Phineas. The eastern border of the parish was now becoming quite subdued and civilized. A substantial framed house was built on the Munyan farm by Joseph Munyan in 1739. Six sons of Israel Joslin settled a few years later on farms in this vicinity. New settlers, too, were constantly arriving. Nathan Bixby of Topsfield, in 1733, bought a hundred acres of land of John Sabin, beginning at Wolcott's northwest corner, and there established himself. Joseph Town, also of Topsfield, bought land afterwards included in the Town Neighborhood, in 1733. Stephen Cummins purchased of Town, a tract adjoining Benjamin Bixby's in 1736. John Holmes of Stoughton bought land near Nathaniel Brown's and Lake Chaubongam, in 1738. Samuel Porter and Joseph Flint of Salem, the same year, purchased part of the Whiting farm of Howe and Starr, and settled south of Lake Chaubongagum. Land given to John Mills of Braintree by Captain John Chandler of Woodstock "for love and friendship," and afterwards confirmed to his sons, was apparently first occupied by Josiah Mills at about this date. Lusher Gay in 1737 settled in the South Neighborhood on land first improved by Samuel Lee. Land bordering on Pomfret, "north of the road leading to Lieutenant Dwight's," was sold by Bartholomew of Woodstock to David Barrett in 1738. William Alton not long after settled in that vicinity. James Dike of Dudley removed to Thompson in 1740, marrying a daughter of Samuel Narramore. In 1741, Nathaniel Jacobs of Bristol, Rhode Island, after a brief residence in Woodstock, purchased of John Wiley for £900, old tenor, the remaining part of the Saltonstall tract. Wiley returned to Woodstock. Jacobs and his five sons took possession of this wild tract, which afterwards was known as the Jacobs District. Deer still ranged its woods, and bears were not infrequent. His house, as the last preceding a long stretch of wilderness, became a

welcome resting-place to many a weary traveler, and was widely known as the Half-way House between Hartford and Boston.

These new inhabitants, with the children of the early settlers, identified themselves with the interests of the parish and added greatly to its strength and prosperity, and soon it was said that the second society of Killingly exceeded the first in numbers and wealth. The church received many accessions, but as there was great remissness in bringing letters from other churches, it was voted, September 13, 1738, "Y<sup>t</sup> such persons as reside among us and have took with us for a considerable time at y<sup>e</sup> Lord's table, shall gett letters of dismission or recommendation from y<sup>e</sup> churches whereunto they belong or be debarred from our communion any longer, provided they don't do it on or before the Sacrament in November next." Accordingly on that day, November 12, sixteen persons brought letters from Killingly and six from other churches, and the accessions continued till in four years the membership of the church had nearly trebled. All parties united in affection for the church and its pastor, and the only difficulty apparent for many years was collecting the prescribed assessment for the support of the Lord's table. A committee of three brethren were joined with the pastor to receive the deacons' account of the contributions at the close of the year, and such as neglected to pay their quota at the specified time were "lyable to censure before y<sup>e</sup> church." The derangement of the currency made it needful to raise this annual quota gradually in ten years from two to six shillings. Jonathan Clough and William Larned were chosen deacons of the church in 1742.

The efforts of the society at this time were chiefly directed to keeping up the credit of Mr. Cabot's salary, and providing seats for the congregation. Twenty, thirty, forty, and finally eighty pounds were needful to make up the depreciation of currency. In 1739, the illness of Mr. Cabot made it necessary to hire a minister for two months, defraying the charge by a contribution every Sabbath. The cost of Mr. Cabot's wood was defrayed by an annual rate. Though the meeting-house was sufficiently ample, its seats were insufficient for the increasing congregation, and young men and women, according to the fashion of the day, begged the privilege of building pews for their own especial accommodation. John Dresser and twelve others were allowed "to build the hind-seats in the side gallery into a pew and take it for their seats." Ephraim Guile, Richard Bixby, Bryant Brown and nine others built one in the front gallery. The corresponding half of this pew was built by five young women—Abigail Cady, Rebecca and Mary Merrill, Esther Wiley and Rachel Green, "at their own proper cost and charge, and for their own use to set in"—a board partition extending to the roof of the house discreetly precluding open communication between

the sections. A pew over the men's stairs was next allowed to six young men. Nothing further was required by the meeting-house, save occasional mending of glass, till 1743, when it was voted, "to finish the inside"—Josiah Mills undertaking "to pint the peak ends with lime and also the inside of the roof, and lath the cracks of the roof, and plaster the sides above the lower girths and the insides of the meeting-house against the gallery stairs; also to put in good joyce and lath and plaster over-head, and case the windows, and lath and plaster against the Rev. Mr. Cabot's pew." This being accomplished, and lathing and plastering under the galleries, and the underpinning rectified by laying the stones in clay mortar—Henry Green, Major Sabin and Lieutenant Child were appointed to seat the completed house to the best of their judgment.

The relations of Thompson with Killingly were still indefinite and obscure. According to the enactment of 1729, Killingly was restricted "to the ancient claimed and reputed line of the Massachusetts, called Woodward's and Saffery's line," and Thompson was simply a religious society outside of any town organization, but neither town nor society accepted this construction, and Thompson was considered a part of Killingly, and bore her share of public works and charges. One of the representatives to the Assembly, and a fair proportion of town officers, were always chosen from Thompson Parish. Simon Bryant, John Dwight, Hezekiah Sabin, Jonathan Clough, Joseph Cady, Jedidiah and Urian Horsmor and Penuel Child were sent successively as deputies. Jacob Dresser was chosen town-clerk in 1744. William Larned, in 1746, was voted a small sum of money in return "for the good service he hath done the town as treasurer." Samuel Morris, in consideration of his services in maintaining bridges and public roads, was exempt through life from country taxes.

Killingly's satisfaction in administering the affairs of Thompson Parish was greatly marred by her inability to gain full possession of its territory. The controversy with non-resident claimants was continued for many years, Killingly resolutely refusing to submit to the "Explanation of 1729," on the ground that it was based upon a false assumption; that it made Woodstock's south boundary-line correspond with Woodward's and Saffery's line, whereas, it was evident by a map drawn by commissioners from both colonies, that two miles in length of Woodstock's territory, and several hundred acres of the land laid out to Thompson lay *south* of that ancient reputed boundary, within the limits always allowed to Connecticut by Massachusetts, and included in the original grant to Killingly. No Massachusetts grant, or agreement of commissioners could confer, Killingly argued, a lawful title to this land, and for it she battled with the most persistent energy, boldly

laying out farms and taking possession, and defending her claim through the various Courts of Windham County. Daniel Cady, in the name of the town, brought an action of ejection against Joseph Thompson. Thompson, by his agent, brought an action of trespass against Joseph Cady, and when "debarred from his just rights" by the judgment of the Superior Court, again appealed to the General Assembly and demanded a new trial. James Wadsworth, Ebenezer West and Captain William Throop were then appointed a committee, "to hear all parties, and settle the whole affair by composition, if it might be gained, but if disappointed therein to give opinion what other acts might be proper to quiet said Thompson in his farm." Repairing to Killingly, April 23, 1734, these gentlemen met Elisha Paine, agent for Mr. Joseph Thompson of Great Britain; James Leavens and Isaac Cutler, representatives of the proprietors of Killingly; and Joseph Leavens, Simon Bryant and Captain Howe, agents of the town—and carefully considered the pleas and allegations of all parties. That Killingly was right in asserting that part of Thompson's land was south of Woodward's and Saffery's line, all conceded. Thus it was laid down on the map of the Massachusetts southern boundary line, as established by the Commissioners of both colonies, but the matter had been settled by a solemn compact between the Governments, and this Connecticut land had been confirmed to Thompson by the Government of Connecticut. Efforts had been made to satisfy the demands of Killingly. Some of the land she had been allowed to keep and an equivalent granted to Thompson. Two hundred acres laid out to Rev. Mr. Noyes had been purchased by the Colony and conveyed back to Thompson, and about six hundred acres were still claimed by Killingly.

The committee reported, May 16th, that all the valuable land in Thompson Parish had been laid out with buildings and large improvements upon it, and should Killingly be allowed this six hundred acres they would be obliged to grant an equivalent to Mr. Thompson in another place, probably west side of Housatonic River, but thought it reasonable that Thompson should first be allowed a new trial and have liberty to bring another action, and recommended that since Killingly had laid out the north part of the town, an act should be passed, forbidding proprietors and surveyor to lay out any of the farms allowed to Massachusetts claimants. As for that little mistake of the Assembly in declaring that Woodstock line should be taken for Woodward's and Saffery's, about which Killingly made such ado, the committee opined, that, inasmuch as Massachusetts in laying out that township, while endeavoring a conformity unto its southern boundary line, had inadvertently run two or three miles south of it, and thus Woodstock line obtained the name of Woodward's and Saffery's line, and was esteemed



and taken to be upon that line, the Assembly had done no wrong in making the aforesaid declaration.

Following these suggestions, the Assembly enacted that no title given by the proprietors of Killingly to any of the land allowed to Massachusetts claimants should be considered valid, and granted Thompson the privilege of another trial. The Superior Court of Windham County, March, 1735, gave judgment in his favor. The proprietors of Killingly, in 1736, and again in 1739, most earnestly protested against the decision, declaring:—

I. Said land was granted to Killingly by those who had just and legal rights before Thompson had any just or legal claim.

II. Thompson never had any right, but only a pretended one.

III. The pretended equivalent, if ever the same was given, was after the grant to Killingly.

IV. The additional grant made to Killingly, on condition that claimers be not disturbed, the proprietors of Killingly never accepted—and to force men to part with their inheritance against their will is what your petitioners think to be against our English laws. . . . Reasons for not accepting the grant:—

1. Land not near so much in quantity.

2. Not half so good as to intrinsic value.

3. The situation did exceedingly discommode the petitioners, it being so far from them."

The petitioners also alleged:—

"That Thompson, Wolcott, Gore, Gardner and Gambling continued to claim land under the five-thousand-acre grant, and had never made any division among themselves but each took what he pleased, and that those on the north and west had some hundreds more than their proportion, and that those on the south had crowded the proprietors of Killingly, that there had been lawsuits, but all to no purpose; that honest men in Killingly had been turned out of their inheritance without redress; inhabitants estopped from improvements, and that by the same rule that they extended one rod out of Gore's survey, they might extend all over Killingly and much more; that the people were in danger and could not stand it, and asked for a new trial or a wise and judicious committee, that they might not be utterly undone."

These continued clamors called out further investigation. The venerable John Chandler, now judge and colonel, was called upon to state "all that he knew concerning the land at a place called Quinna-tisset." With his usual clearness and candor, Colonel Chandler detailed the various sales and surveys of this land; exhibited attested copies of the deeds granted by Massachusetts to Dudley and Stoughton, and by them to Thompson, Freak and others, and also of the original plots and surveys of this land; declared that he knew that several families were settled upon this land previous to the grant of Killingly in 1708, and that the titles of Thompson, Wolcott, Gore, Gardner and Gambling, had never been contested either by Massachusetts or Connecticut. In view of these facts, and that Connecticut in the agreement of 1713, had allowed these lands to the claimants and received an equivalent, and that Killingly without it had received more than the eight or nine miles in length expressed in the grant—the Assembly declared, "pleas

of abatement of petition sufficient," and confirmed to Joseph Thompson of London, his two-thousand-acre tract in the north part of Killingly, choosing to submit to the loss of a part of her lawful territory rather than break her covenant, and re-open controversy with Massachusetts.

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## IX.

### TOWN AFFAIRS IN KILLINGLY. DISMISSAL OF MR. FISK. MEETING-HOUSE CONTROVERSY. SOCIETY DIVISION.

**A**FTER the erection of Thompson Parish, affairs in Killingly were managed with more order and regularity. A book for the inscribing of town acts was procured, and the proceedings at town-meetings thenceforth duly recorded. The first town-meeting in Killingly of which there is existing record was held November 25, 1728—more than twenty years after town organization. But forty-four regularly-admitted freemen were then reported, not half the adult male residents. A large number of these freemen were inducted into the various public offices. Justice Joseph Leavens served as moderator of the meeting, and was continued as town-clerk and first selectman. Eleazer Bateman, Isaac Cutler, Joseph Cady and Benjamin Bixby were also chosen townsmen. Robert Day served as constable; Thomas Gould and Jonathan Clough, as branders; Joseph Barret and John Russel, grand-jurymen; Haniel Clark, Jabez Brooks, William Whitney, Israel Joslin, William Larned and Daniel Lawrence, as surveyors; Daniel Waters, Andrew Phillips, Nathaniel Johnson and Jaazaniah Horsmor, as listers; Benjamin Barret and Jacob Comins, as fence-viewers; John Hutchins, tithing-man. Peter Aspinwall, James Leavens, Sampson Howe and Joseph Cady still remained in charge of the public lands in the township. It was agreed, "That the annual meeting for the choice of town-officers should be held thereafter on the first Tuesday of December"—a warrant on the sign-post a week previous to be sufficient warning. The place of meeting was to be the meeting-house in the first society.

The more orderly arrangement and settlement of the new parish received immediate attention. All inhabitants of the town qualified for voting were warned to meet at the old meeting-house, on the last Tuesday of April, 1729, "at twelve of y<sup>e</sup> clock at noon," there to consider of some way to proportion the last year's school-money to the two

societies. The proportion was regulated according to the list of each society. Deacon Aspinwall and Simon Bryant were appointed to meet the General Court's committee at the house of Benjamin Bixby in May, to settle the bounds of the parish and represent the town in anything it might be concerned in. A year later, a committee was sent to lay out ways in Thompson Parish. As some inhabitants had been admitted without sufficient scrutiny, it was voted, "That for the future no person should be voted in inhabitant, but what brings the qualifications to the town that the law requires."

The military company in the south part of the town was now re-organized, with Ephraim Warren for its captain, Isaac Cutler for lieutenant and Samuel Danielson, ensign. Isaac Cutler, Sampson Howe and Mrs. Mary Lee were allowed to keep houses of public entertainment. Roads throughout the town required remodeling. The Chestnut Hill settlers petitioned for better accommodations, and were allowed a way from Serjeant Ebenezer Knight's at the south end of the hill, northward over the hill to Lieutenant Isaac Cutler's, "as the road was laid out by Chestnut Hill purchasers through their tract." Bridle-roads with gates for passing, crossing the hill, were also allowed from Ebenezer Knight's to John Lorton's, and from Ebenezer Brooks' to Joseph Barret's. A highway was also ordered from the bridge over Whetstone Brook to the settlement in South Killingly, and a cart-bridge over Little River in Daniel Lawrence's field. In 1731, Captain Warren, Captain Howe and George Blanchard were appointed "to perambulate the highway that comes from Plainfield, leading towards Oxford," remove nuisances and report needful alterations. This important road, communicating with Boston, Norwich and New London, was then thoroughly perambulated and surveyed, from John Hutchins' on the south to Nathaniel Brown's on the north—a distance of eighteen or twenty miles—and some important alterations suggested. Instead of winding westward around the base of Killingly Hill, it was now carried "to a heap of stones on a rock upon the hill," facilitating settlement on this beautiful eminence. An attempt to secure a road over the northern extremity of this hill, connecting Sabin's Bridge over the Quinebaug with the road to Providence, was, however, unsuccessful. This movement was initiated by Samuel Cutler, who, after buying and selling farms in various localities, settled at a place called The Four-fanged Oak, about two miles northeast of Sabin's Bridge. This bridge decaying and falling in pieces, Cutler in 1731 replaced it at the cost of £90, and petitioned the Assembly for forgiveness of country rates, license to keep a place of public entertainment, and a committee to lay out a way from said bridge to the road that goes to Providence. This road, which would indeed have proved a

great public convenience, saving travelers the long *detour* about Killingly Hill, was, he averred, "now traveled on but not yet laid out." This request being refused, Mr. Cutler next applied to the parties most interested, and in August, 1732, a town meeting was warned "to consider of altering the country road that goes through the town towards Providence at the west end, in order to meet a road laid out by the town of Pomfret at David Howe's mills." The town voted, "not to alter the road." Cutler, however, maintained his position, and in the following year "was discharged for paying country rates for ten years ensuing." The way past his house, though never regularly laid out, was gradually improved, and became in time a common thoroughfare.

The various public enterprises in which Killingly engaged, and the expensive controversy with Thompson and Massachusetts proprietors, absorbed much of her income, and she often found it difficult to meet her ordinary expenses. In 1734 the town voted, "If any person or persons shall have money sufficient to procure a book for ye record of deeds for this town, they shall have ye same refunded, and repaid to them again." Shepard Fisk and Jacob Dresser were able to advance the requisite sum, which was repaid them after a long interval. Simon Bryant, chosen in 1731 "to wait on the Rev. John Fisk in case he goes to Hartford, and to assist him and to represent him in his absence in case the said Mr. Fisk cannot go," after ten years' delay was reimbursed the four pounds expended in that service.

While most of the early settlers of Killingly were still vigorous and active, some had already passed away. Mr. James Danielson laid out a burial-ground between the rivers for the use of the inhabitants, and was the first to be interred in it. Its first head-stone bore the following inscription:—

"In memory of the well-beloved Mr. James Danielson, who, after he had served God and his generation faithfully many years in this life, did, with the holy disciple, lean himself upon the breast of his Beloved, and sweetly fell asleep in the cradle of death, on the 22d day of January, A. D. 1728, in the 80th year of his age. 'A saint carries the white stone of absolution in his bosom, and fears not the day of judgment.'"

Mr. Danielson's estate was valued at £1,390. His son Samuel succeeded to the homestead and much of the landed property. James, who had settled in Lebanon, received a hundred pounds. Four hundred pounds were left for his grandson, James, son of Samuel, "to bring him up to college," under the advice and direction of Rev. Ebenezer Williams. The five negroes left by Mr. Danielson—Cæsar, Zipporah, Dinah, Hannah and Jethro—were valued at six hundred pounds.

In 1728, Jacob Spalding, the first settler of South Killingly, was thrown from his cart and instantly killed. He left two young children,



Simeon and Damaris. His widow occupied the homestead, and before long married Edward Stewart, a reputed scion of the royal family of Scotland, and a zealous adherent of James II. and the Stewart dynasty.

Very few new inhabitants appear in Killingly during this period. Its increase was mainly restricted to children of the first settlers. Shepard Fisk, afterwards a prominent public man, settled near Killingly Centre prior to 1730, and Daniel Lawrence of Plainfield established himself on a farm in the Owaneco purchase. In 1728, the proprietors of this tract voted, "To lay out and equalize twenty-two hundred-acre shares, and those that have improved or settled said tract shall have their hundreds where they have improved and settled therein." This land was distributed in 1730, to Joseph, Nathaniel and Edward Spalding, Joseph Parkhurst, William Blodgett, Samuel Howe, Daniel Woodward, Thomas Pierce, John Hutchins and the heirs of Jacob Spalding. John Lorton, Michael Hewlet, Samuel Spalding and Edward, Jun., Ebenezer Kee, Timothy Parkhurst, John Douglas, John Wilson, and John Priest were admitted as additional proprietors. Title to land south of Manhumsqueag bounds was confirmed to Daniel Lawrence. The Plainfield residents soon sold out their shares of this land to prospective settlers, and its population rapidly increased. Roads were laid out connecting this settlement with Chestnut Hill and Killingly Centre. In 1732, the south inhabitants were permitted by the town to build a pound for their own use at their own charge. As all of these families were four, and some five, six and even seven miles from the meeting-house, attendance upon public worship was found very difficult and burdensome, and in the winter of 1734-5, they hired a minister to preach to them in their own neighborhood, but were still compelled to continue the usual rate for the support of Mr. Fisk. Application for relief to the authorities of Killingly proving insufficient, the South Killingly people petitioned the General Assembly in April, 1735, representing "that these families, numbering a hundred and fifty souls, and but few of their women and children were able to attend public worship; and begging them, as fathers ready to help their distressed children in times of difficulty, to grant them liberty to hire an orthodox minister five months in the year, and freedom from the ministerial tax during that period." This request was graciously granted, and regular religious worship thenceforth held through the wintry season in South Killingly. The inhabitants and proprietors of this section signing the petition, were—William Spalding, Edward Stewart, Nathaniel Patten, John Moffatt, Levi Preston, Amos Pearce, Nathaniel Blanchard, Boaz Stearns, Richard Whittemore, John Eaton, Daniel Lawrence, Joseph Hutchins, Wyman Hutchins, Daniel Kee, John Firman, Nathaniel and

Josiah Hewlett, Joseph Hoffes, Lebbeus Graves, Daniel Foskett, Stephen Spalding, Jonathan Russel, William Whiting, John Priest and John Wilson. Some of these signers were residents of a strip of town land east of the Owaneco Purchase, which was laid out and distributed by the proprietors' committee.

Population, though now diffused throughout the township, was still more numerous along the valleys and in the vicinity of the meeting-house. A blacksmith's shop was allowed in 1735, "on that corner of the sequestered land near Mr. Fisk's corner." One of the first residents of Killingly Hill was probably Noah, son of Joseph Leavens, who established himself on its southern extremity about 1740. Dr. Thomas Moffat, the first regular practicing physician in Killingly, occupied a site on the western brow of this hill, between Noah Leavens and Mr. Fisk. The road over and west of the hill was often altered to suit the convenience of the inhabitants. Samuel Cutler, after many fruitless efforts, was allowed to open his house for travelers in 1740. The tavern-stand afterwards known as Warren's, at the fork of the roads a half-mile east of Cutler's, was first occupied by John Felshaw, who was licensed to keep a house of public entertainment in 1742. John Hutchins, at the same date, was allowed the like privilege in the south of the town.

The disposition of wandering cattle gave much trouble to the Killingly authorities for many years. The great extent of the town and the unsettled state of its bounds, made it very difficult to restrain or recover them. Great numbers were accustomed to roam at large, foraging for themselves upon the public commons. Pounds were allowed in every neighborhood, and to any individual who was willing to build and maintain one, and were filled with sheep, swine, cows and horses, taken up singly or by dozens, often in suffering condition. Committees were often appointed "to look into the affair of strays in our town, call in the sums due the town for stray creatures, with full powers to prosecute." Even cattle from distant parishes were attracted to the free commons of Killingly, as is shown by the following "Remonstrance of Samuel White of Roxbury"—(West Woodstock):—

"Gentlemen of the town of Killingly:—

These come to inform you that in July, 1746, I had strayed away from my house two creatures—an ox and a cow. The cow I bought of Mr. Jabez Lyon of Woodstock; the ox I bought out of a drove. I know not where they came from, and notwithstanding I took a great deal of pains after said creatures but never heard of them till about a month ago, and then I found said creatures at Mr. Lee's in your town, and they had been strayed and are outlawed, and what they were prized at belongs to your town. But your Respondent is a poor man, not able scarcely to maintain his family, and entreats your favor that you, by a vote of your town, would give me up your right in said creatures, and you will greatly oblige your humble servant,

SAMUEL WHITE.

*Roxbury, November 3, 1747.*"

By vote of the town, the prayer of this humble petitioner was granted, an act of neighborly kindness quite brightening the dingy old records. A strayed heifer, which died on John Felshaw's hands, was also allowed him.

This corner town, bordering upon Massachusetts and Rhode Island, was also afflicted with strays of a different order, and many a fee was paid to selectmen and constable for ridding the town of disorderly tramps and vagabonds. Families of idle Indians still roved about, levying tribute of food and cider. The squaws Thwait and Bliss are warned out of town, and a fee paid "for traveling after Hepzibah Mackintier, to warn her out of town." Douty Mighill and Hannah Maxman were also driven out of town, and Edward Stewart, forbidden to entertain one Sherrad at his house.

The church in the first society of Killingly was for a time very prosperous. A season of special religious interest occurred in 1728-9, when sixty were added to its membership, more than making up the number dismissed to the new church in Thompson Parish. Eleazer Bateman, Jr., was chosen deacon in 1730; Haniel Clark, in 1733. The ministry to Mr. Fisk was acceptable and profitable to his people till a rupture occurred, from some cause not now manifest. "At a regular meeting of the first church of Killingly, July 8, 1741, after the meeting was opened by prayer, Mr. Fisk, upon the advice of neighboring ministers, moved to the church to dismiss him from his pastoral relations." His request was granted by a clear majority. The Windham County Association was soon after called, "To consider and determine the differences and difficulties between said Fisk and the church, arising from several scandalous reports spread abroad concerning Mr. Fisk." Deacon Bateman, Justice Leavens, Samuel Danielson, Ebenezer Knight and Gideon Draper were appointed a committee to represent the church and provide for the Council. No record of the result is given, but it probably confirmed the dismissal of Mr. Fisk. The nature of the charges against him is not declared, but a succeeding pastor, with opportunity of judgment, was of opinion that they were not of any flagrant immorality. The church, at this date, numbered over four hundred members. Mr. Fisk, during his ministry, performed 763 baptisms, admitted 254 into full communion, and 148 to the half-way covenant. August, 1741, the committee of the church applied to the Association for a minister, and were recommended to several candidates, but did not succeed in securing one.

The loss of the minister was soon followed by a protracted and violent controversy respecting a meeting-house. The rude church edifice of 1715 was quite inadequate for the populous and thriving township of 1741, and the inhabitants of the south society were called

together, September 13, to see if they would vote to build a new meeting house. Mr. Daniel Waters was chosen moderator, and eighty against five voted in favor of building. Samuel Danielson was then chosen agent to ask for a committee from the General Assembly to ascertain the place suitable. Jonathan Trumbull, Jonathan Huntington and Ebenezer Wales were appointed, who selected a spot two rods south from the old meeting-house, with the expectation that a new society would be set off in the south of the town. The residents of North Killingly favored division and the selected site; those of Killingly Centre and Chestnut Hill preferred a central site that would accommodate the whole society. Samuel Danielson, Captain Ephraim Warren, Gideon Draper and Boaz Stearns were the leaders of the latter party, and their representations to the Assembly that the spot fixed upon was two miles from the north end of the society and eight from the south, and that some place could be assigned which would be agreeable to almost all the inhabitants, procured the appointment of a new committee in May, 1742. This second committee—Deacon Eleazer Cary of Windham, Josiah Conant and Experience Porter—repaired to Killingly in August, and after due consideration selected for the meeting-house site “a bare hill belonging to Captain Warren,” long appropriately known as Break-neck—a rocky, precipitous, almost inaccessible eminence, remote from the common thoroughfares of travel, whose only advantage was its position near the centre of the society. A meeting-house on this bleak height would accommodate, it was thought, the different sections, prevent further parish division and inaugurate a new business centre. To further this end, land for a training-field and burial-ground, and a quarter-acre for the meeting-house were at once offered to the society by Captain Warren.

This decision, and the spirit and determination manifested by the central party, threw the northern inhabitants into great excitement and consternation. The Leavenses, Cadys, Cutlers and other ancient and leading families vehemently opposed the removal of their meeting-house, and thus expressed their views to the General Assembly:—

“The memorial of the antient settlers in Killingly, inhabitants of the first society, sheweth:—That your memorialists and their ancestors, when their number was much below their present number, being granted a township, they with a small assistance granted by the General Assembly, built a meeting-house, called and settled a minister and have honorably supported and maintained him; That in process of time, the inhabitants increasing, a society was settled in the north part of the town, where a meeting-house is built, a worthy minister settled and duly supported; That for some years the town increasing southward, the inhabitants of that part have been a sort of winter parish, and have had preaching among themselves with a view of their being in convenient time a society by themselves; That the first or old meeting-house being exceedingly out of repair, there is a necessity that a new one be erected for the worship of God as soon as may be; That your memorialists inhabiting that part of the town which underwent or bare the burthen



and charge of the first settlement, cannot but look upon it as a very great hardship if they shall be obliged to assist in the building a new house for public worship to be set at a great distance from them, to gratify ye inhabitants of ye south part, especially since ye committee sent by ye Court directed said house to be built where very few can be accommodated, remote from settlements, environed with rocks and swamps, and will require a vast charge to purchase and make new ways through particular properties and enclosures or ye people be obliged to travel to and fro from thence in round-about ways, which will oblige many in both extremes to travel six or seven miles to meeting, and when they come there, nothing to shelter themselves, their horses and furniture from the inclemency of weather and stormy seasons, while many in both extremes will be nearer Plainfield or Thompson—or the society may be divided as that both may be accommodated. Your humble memorialists have taken a great deal of pains and care in considering their own circumstances and the consequences that might follow in continuing one society, or erecting a meeting-house where the late committee have placed it, and they esteem themselves happy in having a wise Assembly to resort to—and their prayer is, that they and their families may be made into a distinct precinct or another committee appointed.

Joseph Leavens.	Joseph Cady.	Stephen Covill.
John Fuller.	Stephen Cady.	John Knight.
Israel Proctor.	William Blanchard.	Andrew Philips.
Samuel Winter.	Eb. Wilson.	Samuel Winter, Jr,
Isaac Cutler.	John Felshaw.	John Winter.
David Robbins.	John Winter,	Samuel Cutler.
Nath. Coffin.	Nell. Alexander.	Isaac Cutler, Jr.
Samuel Sumner.	George Blanchard.	Joseph Covill.
James Leavens.	Benj. Cady.	Eseck Moffat.
John Church.	Noah Leavens.	Thomas Moffat.
Thomas Whitmore.	Joseph Cutler.	Thomas Mighill.
John Stephens.	Jonah Firman.	Matthew Allyn.
James Mighill.	Jonathan Cady.	Daniel Lawrence.
William Robinson.	Cyprian Morse.	John Brown.
Israel Shaw.	Samuel Whitmore.	John Marsh.
Benj. Leavens.	John Fuller.	Benj. Barret.
David Cady.	Joseph Robinson.	John Mighill.

Oct., 1742."

Though the policy of the times strongly favored church centralization, this petition was not without effect. The pleas of such prominent and influential men as Justice Leavens, Joseph Cady and others could not be disregarded. Action on the committee's report was delayed, and a third committee appointed, but "providentially prevented" from fulfilling its commission. Killingly, meanwhile, was left for a year in the most unsettled condition, with no stated pastor, no regular religious services and party spirit rising higher and hotter. A rumor that the third committee was about to report in favor of parish division called out, in September, a strong protest from Samuel Danielson and John Hutchins:—I. Because the whole list is only £8,024, which if equally divided, would not be able to set up and maintain public worship, and the division made as proposed would leave but £2,411 for the south society, and its inhabitants lived on the meanest lands in the whole society. II. If the society should be divided, the travel to meeting would be very little less, the second spot being as commodious as two houses would be." Influenced by these representations, the Assembly

resolved, "That the report of the second committee be established, and the society proceed to build a meeting-house upon the spot affixed by them."

A society meeting was at once called, November 21, 1743, to act upon the order of the Assembly, and the question being put "Whether or no the society would now proceed to build a meeting-house on said place"—Break-neck Hill—it was voted that they would not by a great majority. At the annual meeting for the choice of officers, December 13, the northern party still predominated. Justice Leavens was chosen society clerk; the same with Isaac Cutler and Levi Preston, committee; Joseph Leavens, Daniel Waters and David Cady to supply the pulpit—all with great quietness, and the meeting adjourned. But when a week later, the society again met to resume consideration of the meeting-house question, a different spirit was manifested. The Break-neck party were out in great force and sundry persons that had no right by law to vote in such affairs presented themselves, and when challenged by the moderator, Justice Leavens, broke out into open clamor and contention. Attempts to bring the assembly to order were unsuccessful, and so great were the tumultuous noise and rupture, that, fearful of evil consequences, the moderator dissolved the meeting and went away with a great part of the people. The Break-neck party, thus left in possession of the field, proceeded to re-organize, chose a moderator, appointed a new society clerk and committee, and voted to build a large meeting-house on Break-neck Hill, as directed by the General Assembly.

This vote was immediately acted upon. The power thus usurped was held and exercised, and the triumphant Break-neckers seemed about to carry everything before them. Samuel Danielson, as clerk, warned meetings at pleasure, and the committee hastened with all speed to collect materials and prepare the ground for the new building. March 28, 1744, was appointed for the raising. A few days previous, a meeting was warned by Justice Leavens, to see whether or not to divide the society, which resulted in another triumph for the Break-neck party. Boaz Stearns was chosen moderator. Sixty-three were for dividing and sixty-seven against it—but seven of these latter votes were pronounced illegal. The greatest confusion and excitement now prevailed in the society. A special messenger was dispatched to the Governor and Council, reporting these irregularities and dissensions and the high-handed proceedings of the Break-neckites. On the day appointed for the raising, a large company gathered on Break-neck. One side of the frame was raised, and part of another, when Justice Leavens, Captain Isaac Cutler and others came upon the ground with a message from the Deputy Governor and Council. Silence being

enjoined, Mr. Joseph Cady proceeded to read in the hearing of Samuel Danielson, Daniel Waters, Gideon Draper, Boaz Stearns and others, the following "articles":—

"To the Committee of ye prime Society in ye town of Killingly:—

Whereas, Mr. Justice Leavens and Mr. John Leavens have made a representation to us that there were a number of particular persons in said society carrying on ye building of a meeting-house for said society, without ye appointment or direction of said society, and without an act of ye General Assembly authorizing and empowering them or any other for building such a house, intimating that great disorder and confusion are likely to ensue thereupon, wherefore, being desirous that peace, unity and good order (which are ordinarily ye greatest means of ye happiness of societies) may obtain among you, we have thought fit to give you our sense and understanding of the law in this case, made and provided, and our advice thereupon. And as to the law, we are of opinion that, after the place on which to build a meeting-house is fixed by ye General Assembly, that then ye society must proceed to build said house, by a committee appointed for that purpose; which is very expressive, that no particular person or persons may, of their own heads, proceed in this affair, and this is more strongly supported from this, that when any society shall refuse or neglect to proceed to build such house, ye General Assembly will take the same into their own hands, and appoint some persons to carry on and build said meeting-house, so that for any particular persons to take that upon themselves which the General Assembly have reserved in their own hands must be looked upon as a high-handed disorder, which naturally genders strifes and confusion. Wherefore, we advise your people, as friends and well-wishers to your public peace and welfare to stay all further proceedings in ye affair of building ye meeting-house till you can obtain ye order and direction of ye General Assembly thereon, and we desire you to communicate this our opinion and advice to those members of your society who are prosecuting ye affair of building said meeting-house.

Roger Wolcott.  
James Wadsworth.  
Joseph Whiting.  
William Pitkin.  
Ebenezer Silliman.

*Windham, "March 23, 1744."*

This opinion and advice, unaccompanied by any legal instruments, was insufficient to stay proceedings. The resolute Break-neckers heard the articles but "regarded them not," and boldly went on with their raising, and soon their meeting house was reported, raised and covered. At a regular society meeting, held on April 9th, "to choose a committee to supply the pulpit," the Break-neck party were in the ascendancy. Boaz Stearns was chosen moderator; Samuel Danielson, Boaz Stearns and Ephraim Warren, committee to supply the pulpit. It was then voted, "That the society was pleased and satisfied with the meeting-house frame erected on the place prefixt by the Assembly, and Samuel Danielson, Gideon Draper and Joseph Bateman, appointed a committee to carry on and finish said house. Justice Leavens and the northern party indignantly protested against these votes as not included in the warning, and refused to record them. Their opponents retorted that that was not their fault, for they had especially desired the clerk and that in a very public manner, to make the warrant comprehend the business of building. In May, both parties repaired to the

Assembly. Fifty-one of the north inhabitants joined with seven from the extreme south in representing "their unhappy and miserable case, as they were then circumstanced, and must be forever without aid from the Assembly, not having the privileges of ordinances and in the utmost confusion, place affix for meeting-house more than six miles distant from many of them, and difficulties everyway and unsupportable, and prayed the Assembly to take the affair into their own hands, and either divide them into two societies or grant another committee, or *do something*." On the other hand, Warren, Danielson and Stearns, "on behalf of themselves and seventy-four petitioners, representing the majority of the society, denounced the unreasonable and willful opposition of some few members, clothed with the authority of committee and clerk, declared that Justice Leavens would not record their votes, and was unwearied in promoting and carrying out dissensions, that a majority of the society had voted their acceptance of the frame, but could not get a meeting warned, or if they did their votes therefor might not be recorded—committee and clerk all being in opposition—and, thereupon, with a serious concern for ye good and religious advantage of said society, prayed for a committee to build said meeting-house and lay taxes to defray the charges, and for some suitable person to warn a society meeting and provide a moderator, that so their votes might be made binding."

The Assembly, unable to decide between the belligerents, resolved, "That the memorials be continued till October, and the meeting-house no further carried"—and thus the rupture and contentions continued through the summer. The northern party, who were the majority in the church, were resolute in their determination not to remove their place of worship to Break-neck—the southern party were equally determined to force them to compliance and to continue as one society. For a time, the work on the new house was suspended, but on August 24th a meeting was held, warned by Samuel Danielson, which voted to proceed with it, and levy twelve-pence in the pound for that purpose. Eleazer Green was chosen collector, Boaz Stearns agent to memorialize the Assembly in October, when both parties reiterated their grievances. The southern party reported, that, according to the direction of the Assembly, they had erected, on the spot appointed for that purpose, a meeting-house frame, and had procured boards, shingles, clapboards, nails and stuff for window frames, sufficient to enclose and finish the outside of the house. A fourth committee was then appointed—Colonel Huntington, Simeon Minor and Captain Joseph Adams, with instructions to consider the premises and divide the society if they thought best. This committee decided that division was not advisable, and that the new house at Break-neck should be established as the



meeting-house for the whole society, trusting that when public worship was once instituted on this high, sectional differences would be forgotten, and the scattered inhabitants peacefully unite in their geographical centre.

This expectation proved delusive. The triumphant Break-neckers proceeded joyfully to finish their meeting house, call a minister and establish religious services, but the expected reunion did not follow. Both the northern and southern inhabitants utterly refused to accept the situation. "Great and irreconcilable religious differences" now added their bitterness to the sectional feuds. Many members of the society had adopted the Separate principles in vogue after the Great Revival, and the combination of so many conflicting elements into one church was found wholly impracticable. After another winter of strife and wrangling, the major part of the church in Killingly most humbly prayed the Assembly, "That being long grieved with the contentions and injurious proceedings of their neighbors, and seeing no prospect of an amicable and legal division, and having been for nearly four years deprived of a gospel ministry and ordinances, and seeing no rational prospect of having the same, considering the different sentiments that prevail concerning preachers and hearers—they might be still esteemed the first church of Christ in Killingly, and protected and encouraged for the re-settlement of the gospel ministry." They were followed by a number of the southernmost inhabitants, representing, "that the society had erected a new meeting-house at a great distance from the old place, but however well their brethren in that vicinity might think themselves accommodated, the remonstrants found the difficulties and hardships of attending these exceeding great, owing in part to the great length and extreme badness of the way, and part to the great and irreconcilable religious differences between them, and prayed for a new society, and that they might not be compelled to follow those who repaired to the newly-erected house for divine worship."

This double appeal from the north and the south, church and society was effectual. The Assembly was at last convinced of the folly of attempting to restrict the inhabitants of this large territory to one place of worship, and compel their acceptance of this bleak, exposed and inconvenient *centre*. The Break-neck party had won the day and built their meeting house, and no longer opposed a division of parish territory. In October, 1745, a dividing line was agreed upon, extending from the east side of Quinebaug River to Rhode Island Colony line, "so as to leave Deacon Eleazer Bateman's dwelling-house ten rods north of said line, and all the inhabitants south of said line shall remain by themselves a distinct ecclesiastic society, and those who live north side shall be and by themselves become a distinct ecclesiastic society,

save only and except Thomas Bateman, Nathaniel Brown, Gideon Draper, Jun., Salmon Wheat and other citaters, who have liberty to join with said south inhabitants, and also John Firman, Deacon Daniel Lawrence, Benjamin Barret and Israel Proctor, who have liberty to join said northern inhabitants. Each society to take benefit of school money in proportion to estate."

Killingly was thus divided into three religious societies. The long controversy respecting Thompson's land was at last settled, and the north parish formally annexed to the township—Joseph Leavens and Shepard Fisk being empowered, in 1749, "To take the grant and patent of Killingly, and according thereto, with the help of the county surveyor, extend the line of our town from Plainfield's northeast corner to ye line between ye colonies of Connecticut and Rhode Island." The taxable property of the north society was then £3,850; that of the middle society at £4,359; that of the south, £6,122. Vexatious and burthensome controversies were thus, after so many years, harmoniously adjusted, and a new era of comparative peace and tranquillity inaugurated. The inhabitants of the south society were not, however, entirely satisfied. Having with great magnanimity, for the sake of accommodating and compounding differences, refrained from opposing society division on condition that the meeting-house they had built should remain within their limits, they supposed they would remain and be acknowledged as the *first* society in the township, but to their consternation the middle society claimed that distinction. Once more, the south settlers repaired in great wrath to the Assembly, declaring that their neighbors ought not to be the first society, nor did the bill entitle them to it, but was so drawn that neither division was denominated, and praying "that they might be and remain the first society and be called by that name." An emphatic "No," from both houses silenced the petitioners and left the coveted title to the middle society—the inhabitants of Killingly Hill and vicinity, and "descendants of the antient settlers."

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## X.

AFFAIRS IN POMFRET AND MORTLAKE. PETITION FOR NEW TOWN. MINISTERIAL TROUBLES. SOCIETY SET OFF BETWEEN POMFRET AND CANTERBURY.

**P**OMFRET was now flourishing and prosperous, increasing rapidly in wealth and population. Its secular affairs were well managed by competent town officers; its church wisely guided by its excellent

pastor, Mr. Williams, who was greatly respected at home and abroad and his counsel sought in many difficulties throughout the Colony. So highly was he esteemed by Governor Dudley, of Massachusetts, that he bequeathed him twenty shillings to purchase a ring, in token of his regard and friendship. The Rev. Mr. Estabrook entrusted him with the education of his son Hobart; and Mr. James Danielson obliged his advice to be taken in the education of his grand-son. In 1731, he was chosen Fellow of Yale College. As a preacher, Mr. Williams was sound, logical and practical. Of the growth of the church during his ministry, no record is preserved, but in 1729, there were fifty male members. The listed inhabitants and proprietors of Pomfret in 1731, numbered over one hundred—thus distributed, as nearly as can be ascertained, in the different sections of the town:—

## RESIDENTS OR PROPRIETORS OF MASHAMQUET.

Major John Sabin.	John Parkhurst.	Joseph Sabin.
Mrs. Elizabeth Grosvenor.	Ebenezer Sabin.	Josiah Sabin.
Leicester Grosvenor.	Jeremiah Sabin.	Benjamin Sabin.
Edward Payson.	Deacon Benjamin Sabin.	Peter Sabin.
Joseph Griffin.	Capt. Joseph Chandler.	William Sabin.
William Sharpe.	Joseph Grosvenor.	Isaac Dana.
Zeckariah Waldo.	Edward McCoy.	Jacob Dana.
Thomas Goodell.	Nehemiah Sabin.	Thomas Goodell.
John Weld.	Ebenezer Truesdell.	Solomon Sharpe.
Abiel Lyon.	Timothy Sabin.	Nathaniel Sessions.
John Sharpe.	Joseph Tucker.	Joseph Dana.
Benjamin Griffin.	Samuel Sumner.	Humphrey Goodell.
Dea. Philemon Chandler.	John Shaw.	Zachariah Goodell.
	Philemon Chandler, Jr.	

## RESIDENTS AND PROPRIETORS EAST OF PURCHASE.

Major Sabin.	David Howe.	Thomas Mighill.
Noah Sabin.	Nathaniel Johnson.	William Short.
Samuel Paine.	James Sawyer.	Stephen Paine.
Seth Paine.	Jonathan Lyon.	Penuel Deming.
Jonathan Dresser.	Benjamin Sanger.	Isaac Bacon.
Samuel Perrin.	Samuel Gary.	Daniel Bacon.
James Taylor.	Samuel Carpenter.	Matthew Davis.
William Gary.	Henry Taylor.	Noah Upham.

## RESIDENTS WEST OF PURCHASE.

David Stowell.	Nathaniel Stowell.	Thomas Grow,
John Ingalls.	Samuel Kimball.	Caleb Abbot.
Benjamin Chaplin.	Daniel Allen.	Benjamin Allen.
Thomas Durkee.	Samuel Allen.	Jonathan Stowell.

## RESIDENTS AND PROPRIETORS SOUTH OF MORTLAKE AND PURCHASE.

Abiel Cheney.	Joseph Davison.	Henry Bacon.
John Williams.	Samuel Williams.	John Hubbard.
Jehoshaphat Holmes.	Ezekiel Cady.	Ezekiel Whitney.
James Holmes.	Daniel Cady.	Daniel Bemis.
Joseph Holland.	James Cady.	Samuel Spalding.
John Adams.	Richard Adams.	Joseph Spalding.
Nathaniel Woodward.	Joseph Adams.	Zechariah Whitney.
William Davison.	Isaac Adams.	Zechariah Spalding.
Ephraim Hide.	Daniel Adams.	Isaac Leonard, Sen. and Jr.
Samuel Shead.	Jabez Spicer.	David Leonard.
		Thomas Leonard.

## NON-RESIDENTS OR DOUBTFUL.

Samuel Holdridge.	Joseph Phelps.	Robert Bird.
James Danielson.	Edward Houghton.	—— Hammond.
William Burgess.	Samuel Cole.	John Wedge.

Population, it will be seen, had now diffused itself throughout the township. Thomas Grow's settlement was near the Windham line. A large tract of the wild land, west of the Purchase, was owned and occupied by John Stowell, the "schoolmaster" so prominent in Voluntown controversies. A farm in this vicinity was purchased by Joseph Bowman of Dorchester, in 1731. His step-son, Daniel Trowbridge, a youth of twenty, helped clear up this land and make settlement, receiving six months of his time in payment. Three years later, Trowbridge bought of Abiel Lyon a valuable farm of a hundred acres bordering on the Mashamoquet. A substantial cart-bridge was built over this stream at the sawmill, and a highway laid out from it to Windham village. Benjamin Chaplin, Thomas Durkee and Samuel Kimball, residents of the extreme southwest of Pomfret, were allowed to attend worship in Canada parish. The western part of Mashamoquet Purchase was mostly occupied by sons of the first proprietors. David, the second son of Joseph Chandler, settled on second division land a mile west of Pomfret street. Younger Sabins, Sharpes and Goodells, also, cleared up and occupied farms in this section.

Along the Quinebaug valley there were fewer changes, the owners of this valuable land preferring to retain it. The point of land between the Quinebaug and Mill rivers, with the privilege of the Falls, beginning forty rods above the Falls, extending in a straight line northwest to Mill River, thence south by the river till it emptied into the Quinebaug,—now included in Putnam village,—was sold by John and Noah Sabin to David Howe of Mendon, clothier, in 1730. Howe immediately took possession of his purchase and put up a dwelling-house, grist-mill, and malt and dye-houses. The improved facilities thus afforded for grinding, malting and cloth-finishing soon attracted many customers, and Howe's Mills became a noted place of resort for all the surrounding country. The Eatons, a half-mile north, and the Perrins at the south, were the nearest neighbors, but communication was soon opened with other parts of Pomfret and adjoining towns. Sabin's bridge below the Falls was rebuilt, or repaired by Samuel Cutler of The Four-fanged Oak in Killingly, and a way trodden out over the hills to that neighborhood. A private road to this bridge from Perrin's and Gary's farms was thrown open to the public and a bridge constructed over Mill River, in 1732. The inhabitants of Thompson Parish were also, ere long, accommodated with a road to this new business centre. Noah Upham of Malden, brother of Ivory Upham of Thompson, purchased valley land of Joseph Sessions, in 1727.



The diffusion of population made more schools needful. As several families by reason of distance could have no benefit of the schools already established, it was granted by the town that upon the application of any number of families to the selectmen, they should at their discretion accommodate them with a school at any part of the town. In 1733, four schools were ordered: "one at the sign-post; one at the end of Samuel Dana's lane; one at Noah Upham's and one west of Mashamoquet Brook, just at going over the bridge by Lyon's mill." In 1729, Joseph Chandler was appointed captain, Nathaniel Sessions, lieutenant, and Noah Sabin ensign of the train-band. Its former captain, John Sabin, was now major of the Windham County troop.

The peace and prosperity of Pomfret during this period were only marred by its relations with Mortlake, which were in every way uncomfortable and unsatisfactory. The intrusion of a distinct, independent township within its borders was a great detriment and inconvenience, especially as the intruder was wholly without organization and proper government. Residents without rights and responsibilities were not always manageable and agreeable. Poor, witless Peter Davison gave them a deal of trouble, and brought a heavy charge upon them. The County Court of Windham decided that it had no authority in the case, and referred him to the Governor and Council. The Council sent him on to the General Assembly. That body ordered him to be carried again to Norwich, and placed in charge of a selectman or overseer of the poor till the case should be determined by the Superior Court of Windham County. This final trial was held in Windham, March, 1727, when the selectmen of Norwich brought an action against the town of Mortlake. Jonathan Belcher, Esquire, proprietor of that town, was represented by his attorney—William Williams—and judgment rendered in his favor, the Court deciding, "that defendants had shown sufficient reason why they ought not to stand charged with maintenance of said idiot." The cost of Court was allowed to Mortlake. Pomfret's bill of expenses was paid from her own treasury.

The settlers south of Mortlake, between the original north bounds of Canterbury and south line of Pomfret, now numbered twenty-eight families, and were extremely anxious to be set off in a distinct township. Canterbury manifested no opposition; Pomfret expressed its willingness "that they should draw off as far northward as the south line of Mortlake and west to Windham line." A petition to the General Assembly, May, 1728, secured the appointment of a committee to look into their circumstances, which reported, "a tract of eight thousand acres between Pomfret and Canterbury, and thirty-two inhabitants settled thereon, with a rate-list of £2,000; five thousand acres in Mortlake and seven inhabitants; inhabitants six and seven

miles to respective meeting-houses ; land good and arable, sufficient to contain many more people." Encouraged by this report, John Woodward, Richard Adams, Daniel Cady, Isaac Allyn, Zechariah Spalding and others, again petitioned, in October, that in view of the exceeding great hardship, as well in attending the public worship of God on Lord's days, as encountering with other difficulties by their remoteness from the respective towns to which they belonged, "all the land from Canterbury's original north bounds, eight miles north and south, and west to Windham, and so to Pomfret's first ancient bounds, may be added to Jonathan Belcher's township, and be one entire town, with the powers and privileges of other towns." This petition was granted by the Lower House, but rejected by the Upper. Mortlake's manorial privileges might be infringed by incorporation into the proposed township ; Belcher was too powerful a person to be molested.

Disappointed in their township, the inhabitants south of Mortlake sought consolation in hiring a minister—Pomfret, with unwonted generosity, allowing them their proportion of the minister's rate according to the time they should be at the charge of procuring the Word preached. The first minister procured was a Mr. William Blossom, who apparently perambulated, like the schoolmaster, preaching whenever it was deemed convenient. This arrangement, though very convenient and agreeable to the people, brought them into new trouble. Before hiring their minister, they had neglected to ask leave of the Windham County Association, or make proper inquiries respecting his ministerial standing, and before long unfavorable reports were in circulation. The Association, hearing of their irregular proceedings, thought it their duty to inquire into the affair, and appointed a committee of ministers, with full power to do what they should think meet. This committee met at the house of Mr. William Williams of Mortlake, November 29, 1730, and cited Mr. Blossom to appear before them and present testimonials. The intrusive minister refused to obey the summons. Several of Mr. Blossom's hearers then laid a paper before the committee, desiring that they would inquire into his qualifications for the ministry, alleging that he had at divers times and places spoken such contradictions that they could not reconcile them ; lay under the imputation and scandal of being guilty of lying ; read sermons which they had good reason to believe were not his own, and that his abilities for the ministerial work were much questioned. After hearing the charges the committee agreed, "That Mr. Blossom was guilty of contempt of the ecclesiastic authority of Christ and the constitution of the churches in this government," and directed and ordered *him* not to preach within the bounds of Windham County Association, and the *people* not to hear him any longer.

In spite of this decree, Mr. Blossom continued to preach and the people to listen. The Association, indignant at this breach of ecclesiastic discipline, reported in May, 1731, to the General Assembly, that Mr. Blossom still continued to preach under scandal, and that members of Pomfret and Canterbury churches went, in a disorderly manner, to hear him. The Assembly, "sensible of the great evil and disorder of such a practice," advised that those churches call these refractory members to account for it. This advice, if followed, only increased the disturbances. A part of the people still clung to the unlawful Blossom; the remainder procured the services of a young candidate, Mr. Newell—still without leave from Assembly or Association. The little colony between Pomfret and Canterbury was evidently inclined to manage their own ecclesiastic affairs. Meanwhile, their numbers were increasing. The large tract of land, so long held by Governor Saltonstall, was sold in 1731, to Henry Cobb of Mortlake, who immediately sold out farms to Jabez Spicer, Ebenezer Whitney and Daniel Bemis. Daniel Tyler, probably a native of Preston, after purchasing land in several towns of Windham County, settled south of Saltonstall's land about 1730. In May, 1731, upon the memorial of Daniel Cady, Josiah Cleveland and others, dwelling between Pomfret and Canterbury, praying to be made a township—Messrs. Jabez Huntington, William Pitkin and Ebenezer West were appointed by the Assembly, to hear and view the circumstances of said persons, who, in October, reported, "that considering the great difficulties the inhabitants on the said tract are under by reason of their great distance from the public worship of God, it would be an act of justice and for the interest of religion to grant unto them parish powers and privileges." It was, therefore, ordered that a society should be set off, "bounded east with Quinebaug River, west with Windham line, north with the ancient and first bounds of the towns of Pomfret and Mortlake, and from thence extending south to a line run and described by Mr. Josiah Conant, surveyor, . . . September 4, 1731, . . . east and west across the bounds of said Canterbury, and parallel with Canterbury south line; said line . . . to be the south bounds of said parish." It was also ordered, "that, provided an orthodox minister be called and settled in the above mentioned parish, with the allowance of this government and by the approbation of the Association of Windham County," the south part of Mortlake, and also Joseph Holland and Joseph Davison—inhabitants of the south part of Pomfret not included within the specified bounds—should be annexed to said parish, and with the inhabitants of the south part of Mortlake, enjoy all parish privileges within it, until public worship should be regularly set up nearer to them in the townships of Mortlake or Pomfret.

The new society held its first meeting, November 23, 1731. Henry Smith was chosen moderator; Daniel Tyler, clerk; Joseph Adams and Edward Spalding, committee. "It was then put to vote, whether they would employ Mr. Nathaniel Newell any longer in ye work of ye ministry"—and decided in the negative. The young society was already divided. A part of their number still favored their first choice, Mr. Blossom. The committee, as the lawful representatives of an organized body, now applied to the Windham County Association for advice in this important matter. The Association replied, that it could by no means advise them to improve William Blossom, but should oppose him. The reasons against him were more fully confirmed, while Mr. Newell was sufficiently recommended by Mr. Walter of Roxbury, and either he or Mr. Lovett might be properly improved, but had no desire to limit them. At the next society meeting, it was voted to hire Mr. Carker to preach four months. Mr. Blossom thenceforward disappears from the scene, and Mr. Newell is engaged to preach the following year, for sixty-two pounds—the society also finding him his board and a horse.

A minister having thus been secured with the approbation of the Association, the inhabitants of the south of Mortlake prepared to claim the promised annexation. Pomfret, which had only consented that the new society should be set off to the south bounds of Mortlake, strongly objected to this transfer:—"I. Because of our meeting-house being set to accommodate lands of Governor Belcher. II. We lie in such a shape as will ere long lay us under the necessity to be two societies ourselves. III. It appears evident, that they are better accommodated without Mortlake than we shall be with it." Major Sabin and Jonathan Dresser, the deputies from Pomfret, were desired to appear before the Assembly and enforce these reasons, and Ebenezer Sabin was chosen to carry these votes of the town to New Haven, and deliver them to the deputies—fifty shillings being granted him for his wages. Their representations proved ineffectual and in October, 1732, the south half of Mortlake, together with Joseph Holland and Joseph Davison, were formally annexed to the society made out of parts of Pomfret and Canterbury—"the inhabitants to enjoy equal privileges in, and bear their equal and proportionable part of all parish charges with the rest of the inhabitants of said society with respect to the settlement and support of the gospel ministry, building meeting-house and the like."



## XI.

MORTLAKE SOCIETY. ORGANIZATION OF SECOND CHURCH OF  
POMFRET. ORDINATION OF MR. AVERY.  
CHANGES IN POMFRET.

HAVING thus secured the settlement of its bounds, the society was at liberty to provide a suitable place of worship. At a meeting, April 19, 1733, it was voted "To build a meeting-house, and there were twenty-eight for and eleven against it." This opposition was occasioned by a disagreement respecting the site. The training-field given by Richard Adams was the choice of the more southerly inhabitants; a majority preferred a more central location. The latter party gaining ground, in August it was decided by a vote of thirty *versus* eight, "That the meeting-house should stand between Samuel and Zachariah Spalding's, and to establish the place by sending to the Assembly." Messrs. Daniel Lawrence, Ephraim Kingsbury and John Crary were appointed a committee to fix the place, and on November 27, 1733, they met with the inhabitants of the new parish at the house of Mr. Samuel Spalding; heard the parties on both sides; viewed the circumstances of the society, the greater part thereof; took the concessions of parties from the part they did not view, and on consideration of the whole affair, fixed the place to build the meeting-house upon: "on the plain eastward of Mr. Samuel Spalding's now dwelling-house, about twenty or thirty rods off of said Spalding's house." The place thus selected was a few rods northwest of the site of the present Congregational house of worship in Brooklyn. Two and a half acres of land—now included in Brooklyn Green—were soon after conveyed by Mr. Spalding to the society for a meeting-house spot and other uses. The work of building soon commenced under the supervision of the society committee. Mr. Daniel Tyler was "improved" as master-builder; Jonathan Cady as collector. As Mortlake was not accommodated with public officers, the society received permission from the Assembly to appoint a "lister" for that part annexed to them, and in case any of its inhabitants should be over-assessed, relief could be procured by application to the selectmen of Pomfret or Canterbury.

On May 17, 1734, liberty was given to the society to embody in church estate, and settle and ordain an orthodox minister over them, but unfortunately they were unable to agree upon the minister. The early difficulties and differences were not yet healed. Part of the society favored Mr. Newell and attempted to give him a formal call to become their pastor, while others strongly opposed him. Proposals to

accommodate differences were ineffectual, and in October, Mr. John Woodward was sent to the Windham County Association to ask advice respecting his settlement. A paper signed by twenty-eight of the society was presented, objecting to the ordination of Mr. Newell: "I. Because the proceedings of the society in calling him were illegal. II. We don't take him to be a man of such ability for the work of the ministry, as that 't'is likely his labors will be so profitable as they ought to be." Edward Spalding, Henry Smith and John Hubbard, opponents of Mr. Newell, appeared before the Association and agreed to leave the question of the legality of the call to Messrs. Richard Abbe, Jabez Perkins and William Marsh, waiving all other matters of controversy, so that in case these gentlemen considered the call legal they would proceed to the ordination of Mr. Newell, otherwise not.

Whether these referees pronounced the call legal does not appear, but in November, Mr. Newell and his adherents reported to the Association: "That the differences still continued notwithstanding all the methods taken to issue them, that their opponents would not come into any agreement with them to choose a council by mutual nomination, and prayed for farther advice." The Association, thereupon, advised and directed Mr. Newell and his brethren to call a consociation council to determine the question of release or ordination. The result of their deliberations is not preserved, but as Mr. Newell thereafter disappears from the scene, it may be inferred that his release was deemed advisable. Measures for church organization were now in progress. Residents in Pomfret and Canterbury applied for dismissal from their respective churches, and invited their former ministers to come and carry on the work of a Fast among them, and assist in embodying them into church estate. This Fast was held November 21, 1734, and appropriate religious services conducted by the Rev. Messrs. Williams and Wadsworth, after which, "in testimony of their holy desires and religious purposes," a sound and scriptural church covenant and agreement were adopted. Its signers were—John Woodward, James Cady, Richard Adams, Benjamin Fasset, William Williams, Joseph Holland, Henry Bacon and Joseph Davison—dismissed from the churches of Canterbury and Pomfret—and Jonathan Parks, from the church of Sudbury. Their number was soon increased by the wives of the constituent members; Joseph Leonard, Edward Spalding, Henry Smith, John Hubbard, and their wives; Joseph Adams, Jr., and Isaac Leonard. William Williams of Mortlake and John Woodward of Canterbury, were elected deacons. The church now encouraged the society in its renewed efforts to seek for a minister, and pursuant to the advice of the ministry, it succeeded in securing Mr. Ephraim Avery of Truro, then residing in Cambridge, who was graduated from Harvard

in 1731. The difficulties and differences had now vanished, and all parties were satisfied "with the gifts and abilities together with the conversation" of the young candidate, and gladly united in calling him to settlement. Captain Joseph Cleveland, Deacon Williams and Henry Cobb were appointed by the society to treat with Mr. Avery, who in view of the fluctuations in currency then prevailing, agreed, "To pay him yearly six-pence upon the list of all the polls and ratable estate until it amounts to one hundred and twenty pounds in money or bills of public credit . . . to be fixed with respect to the following commodities, viz.: wheat, rye, Indian corn, beef, pork, sheep's wool or flax; or that the salary vary according as the price of them or any of them, shall rise or fall from the present year." These terms being accepted by Mr. Avery, the price of these commodities was thus settled, June 17, 1735: wheat at ten shillings per bushel; rye, seven; Indian corn, five; beef, four-pence per pound; pork, six-pence halfpenny; flax, one shilling; wool, three shillings. The church concurred with the call given by the society. The work on the meeting-house was now hastened. It was voted, "To build a pulpit and to have pews all round the meeting-house, only the place for the pulpit, and the doors and the stairs excepted. Some years passed before these were completed. Meanwhile, a body of seats was set up, and the house made ready for the ordination of Mr. Avery, September 24, 1735. All the neighboring ministers participated in the services on this occasion. The Rev. Mr. Coit of Plainfield made the first prayer; Mr. Williams gave the charge; Mr. Wadsworth, the right hand of fellowship; Mr. Cabot the last prayer. The sermon was preached by the father of the young minister, Rev. John Avery of Truro, from II. Timothy, xi: 1. The ordination dinner was prepared at Mr. Jonathan Cady's, two miles westward over Blackwell's Brook, which, being still bridgeless, was forded on this occasion by all the ministers and messengers.

Thus, after so many delays and difficulties, religious worship was at length formally established in the "vacant land between Pomfret and Canterbury," and its much-tried inhabitants conveniently accommodated. The lack of a suitable *name* was now their greatest inconvenience, their legal title—The Society taken out of Pomfret, Canterbury and Mortlake—being as awkward and complicated as their territorial status. The society was commonly designated Mortlake, the church was known as the Second Church of Pomfret. After the successful settlement of their minister, they enjoyed several years of comparative peace and prosperity. The meeting-house was completed in time, with less legislation than was customary at that period, and pews distributed to Mr. Avery, Daniel Cady, Henry Cobb, William

Williams, Benjamin Fasset, Ezekiel and Uriah Cady, Henry Smith, Joseph Holland, Isaac Adams, Edward Spalding, Jonathan Cady, Henry Rice and William Earle. December 2, 1740, it was voted, "To seat the meeting-house, and that all shall be seated but such as have pews, and to be seated according to what they have done to the meeting house, having respect to their age and dignity—the seats dignified thus—the fore seat below, highest; the second-seat, next; the third seat and the first in the front gallery, equal; next, the fourth seat below; next, the fore-seats in the side-gallery, and the rest of the seats according as the committee shall judge." A year later, it was voted, "To put a window in the minister's pew and plaster the gable ends of the meeting-house."

The church continued to increase in numbers—Henry Cobb and wife, Joseph Adams, Sen., and John Adams, Captain James Cleveland, William Darbe, Isaiah Wood, Edward Cleveland, Jonathan Hide, Isaac Parks and others, uniting with it previous to 1740. It was agreed, "That there should be a contribution in the church every time the communion was administered to defray the charges—every male communicant to give sixpence a time; every female, fourpence; every one writing their name on the money contributed, and the deacon giving them credit for it. In 1741, the church gave consent to sing in Dr. Watts' hymns at the sacrament. William Williams, Joshua Paine, Joseph Holland, Robert Freeman, Joseph Davison and Henry Smith, were then chosen committee, "to act with the minister in behalf of the church in dealing with offenders—acts not valid unless confirmed by church." All baptized persons, whether in full communion or otherwise, were under watch and care of the church. Richard Adams, the first settler in the vicinity of Mortlake, died in 1733, before the society was fairly established. He left a large supply of wearing apparel, the usual articles of household furniture, young cattle and colts, three swarms of bees, a Psalm book and Artillery sermon. His sons divided his land; Richard settling on the western, and Peter on the eastern section. His widow married Samuel Butts of Canterbury.

Schools, as yet, received but little attention, the society providing a master three months of the year at the one school-house, and a mistress eight months, for other sections. The prescribed "trainings" were punctually observed upon the training-field, Joseph Cleveland serving as captain.

The relations of this society with its mother township during these years were far from harmonious. Mortlake manor was to Pomfret an intolerable grievance. Unless she could exercise lawful jurisdiction over it she preferred to be entirely free from it. When, despite her



express stipulation, the south half of Mortlake was annexed to the south society, and the north part left on her hands, she thus remonstrated to the General Assembly :—

“Whereas, a certain tract of land lying between Canterbury and Pomfret, was by an Act of the General Court, October 14, 1714, divided equally between the towns, and the Government having seen good to grant to the inhabitants of said tract parish privileges and make them a separate society, whereby their relations to said towns is in some measure vacated; memorialists, therefore, pray that they may be wholly discharged from any relation to said tracts of land as being parts of their town, and that the bounds of Pomfret may be according to their patent and no otherwise—and also because said tract was no part contained in the grant of Pomfret, never annexed to it at their request but contrary, and more especially because the town of Mortlake lies entirely between said parish and Pomfret, which is an unprecedented case, and by reason of the remoteness of the one from the other, and the manner and form of their lying, the inhabitants both of Pomfret and said society are exposed to many inconveniences and difficulties beyond other towns and societies, all which may be made to appear.

*Pomfret, May 4, 1732.”*

This request was unheeded. The General Assembly was unable to make any suitable disposition of Mortlake, and Pomfret was forced to retain her unwelcome appendage. The first meeting of the inhabitants of the north part of Pomfret as a distinct society was held in December, 1731, “warned by an order from Justice Leavens, signed by Major Sabin, Deacon Benjamin Sabin and Abiel Lyon, principal inhabitants.” Major Sabin served as moderator. Jehoshaphat Holmes was appointed society clerk; Edward Payson, Isaac and Joseph Dana, committee; John Weld, collector. School and church matters were thenceforth settled in *society* meetings. In 1732, it was agreed, “That there should be one standing school, kept by a school-master six months in the wintry season, midway upon the road leading from Woodstock to Mr. Williams’ bridge, and the other half of the year be kept by school-dames, in the four quarters of the society.” In 1733, four schools were allowed through the winter, and “as the north part about the sign-post had built themselves a house,” it was now agreed: “That the other parts should provide school-houses for themselves.” Mr. Williams’ salary was now increased to £120. An acre of land “at the corner next ye meeting-house” was offered to the society in 1735, by John Grosvenor for fifteen pounds, to be used as a training field, and apparently accepted.

No attempt was made to conciliate the south society. Some of the inhabitants of the south end refusing for some cause to pay rates, the town empowered the selectmen to ask counsel in law and prosecute or otherwise as they should see best. To a humble petition, asking them to join “in running ye antient south line of Pomfret according to ye antient grant and patent,” the society, “by a vote, declined joining with them in said service.” In 1733, the town voted to petition the General Assembly, “That the old society may be freed from ye

difficulty of being a distinct society, and that they may enjoy their ancient privilege as a town according to first grant." The residence of Mr. Williams and part of his land lying within Mortlake limits, he requested the town to aid him, "in getting his land where he lived annexed to Pomfret, for ye removal of ye difficulty he labored under of living out of the town, and for the bringing of his work and dwelling together." The town voted its consent that this land should be annexed, and instructed its deputies to be aiding and assisting our minister in all ways they are capable in getting his place annexed, but at the same time "were unwilling to have any concern to any other part of Mortlake, upon any account whatever." When the south society attempted to procure better highways, the town voted, "To oppose and withstand the inhabitants of the south part in respect to bearing any part of ye charge in procuring them," and Captain Grosvenor was chosen to appear in Court in behalf of the town. In spite of his remonstrances, a committee was sent to lay out the needed highways. At a town-meeting, June 16, 1737, it was put to vote, "Whether the town would rest satisfied in what the County Court had done respecting a road from the lower to upper end of the town, and there were two yeas and twenty-seven nays." The south inhabitants proceeded to lay out this road under sanction of the County Court. The town ordered its selectmen to go down and view the obnoxious highway, and sent Deacon Holbrook to the Court to express their dissatisfaction, but were finally compelled to yield, "provided the road be made conformable to Governor Belcher's, through Mortlake, and thence come along by Mr. Williams' and Truesdell's, and so to meeting-house."

The grievances of Pomfret were somewhat relieved in 1739, by the transfer of Mortlake into the hands of new proprietors. The south part of Wiltshire was sold by Governor Belcher to Israel Putnam and John Pope, both of Salem. In the course of the year, Putnam purchased Pope's share and took personal possession of Wiltshire Manor. In the following year, all that remained of Belcher's land purchase, viz.: the north part of Wiltshire, the whole of Kingswood and twelve hundred acres in forest and meadow, were sold by him for £10,500, to Godfrey Malbone, a prominent merchant of Newport. Malbone purchased much other land in the vicinity of Williams, Cobb and others, but made no immediate attempt at settlement. The manorial status of Mortlake was unchanged by this transfer of ownership, but its owners were accessible and its land more open for improvement.

Changes were now occurring in all parts of Pomfret. Old settlers were passing away; new ones coming in. Thomas and Ebenezer Grosvenor died in 1730. Their aged mother, Mrs. Esther Grosvenor, survived them several years, dying in 1738, at the advanced age of

eighty-seven. She retained to the last the vigorous habits of her English training, walking every Sunday to the distant meeting-house till a short time before her death. Thomas Grosvenor left three sons—Amos, Robert and Joshua; Ebenezer left John, Ebenezer and Caleb, the former just twenty-one years old at the death of his father. The provision assigned for the support of Ebenezer Grosvenor's family during the settlement of his estate, was two cows, three swine, fifteen bushels malt, fourteen barrels cider, sixty bushels of corn and forty of rye. Major John Sabin, the first settler of Pomfret and long its most prominent citizen, died in 1743. He left to his sons: John, a respected physician in West Farms (now Franklin), and Hezekiah, innkeeper in Thompson, twenty pounds each. To his daughter Judith, wife of Justice Joseph Leavens, one hundred pounds. The remainder of his large estate was given to his son, Noah, who remained in Pomfret. His armor was valued at fifteen pounds; books, four; brass and iron, thirty-five; husbandry utensils, sixty-four; stock, three hundred and six; six horses, ninety; one Indian girl, twenty pounds.

The farm north of the meeting-house owned by Jonathan Waldo, passed into the hands of one of his heirs, Zachariah Waldo of Windham, in 1733, who soon took personal possession. Dr. Thomas Mather, of Suffield, purchased land of Samuel Nightingale, and established himself in Pomfret as its first practicing physician, in 1738. Another representative of the old Puritan stock—Thomas Cotton of Brookline—purchased of James Danielson, in 1749, six hundred acres of land, "beginning at the mouth of Cornet Sawyer's mill brook where it emptieth into the Quinebaug, thence south to the Mashamoquet and thence west to Dana's land." With Cotton's household goods, it is said, were imported to Pomfret its first rat and copper tea-kettle. Howe's mills were sold, in 1742, to John Daniels for twenty four hundred pounds, viz., the land adjoining the Falls, with dwelling-house, barn, mill, malt-house and shop, together with the whole manufacturing stock of the Quinebaug valley, comprising "ye conveniences of three coppers, two presses, one iron screw, two pairs shears, two iron bars, a blue pot, paper for pressing and sear-cloth for malting."

With these settlers were included some less reputable. Dr. John Hallowell, sometimes styling himself physician in Killingly, practiced widely in Pomfret and probably resided there. Information was laid before the Governor, that this Hallowell, living in Pomfret or Killingly, with other persons in company "had got engraving irons, molds to cast plates in, colors to print with," and was intending to print false bills in imitation of the true bills of the Colony. This information appeared so credible, that it was resolved in Council, June 13, 1727, "That the Governor direct the informer to go to Pomfret to said

Hallowell, make further private discovery how far they have proceeded and where the utensils for carrying on that vile practice are lodged, and then make speedy information of the matter to Justice Leavens of Killingly, that the said justice may arrest the persons and examine them and proceed further in that affair as his prudence shall direct him." This same Hallowell was largely concerned in land speculation in Thompson, and was afterwards arraigned before the Courts of Windham county for unlawful professional practice.

Pomfret, with all her prosperity, suffered the usual providential visitations. Reports of fires, floods, drought and hail-storms, occasionally found their way into the Boston newspaper. In 1737, excessive rain, with boisterous winds, raised the streams higher than ever known, carried off bridges and greatly damaged Howe's grist-mill. A barn, filled with hay and stacks of grain, was struck by lightning and consumed in 1742. The following summer a violent hail-storm did much damage in Pomfret and adjoining towns, breaking glass, blowing over a house and barns—"a melancholy time with many." At about the same time, a mischievous old wolf was devastating farm-yards and sheep-folds. With these exceptions, Pomfret enjoyed remarkable prosperity. In 1738, a new road was laid out to Ashford, beginning "at a small fall in Mashamoquet Brook, thirty rods below the old going-over to Ashford." In 1742, it was voted by the society, "That the burial-place shall be fenced with a stone wall at the direction and discretion of the standing committee." Tavern licenses were now granted to Joseph Dana, Zechariah Waldo, Alexander Sessions and Benjamin Hubbard—Waldo living near the meeting-house, the others in the east, west and south parts of the town. Samuel Nightingale was chosen town and society clerk in 1745, upon the death of Jehoshaphat Holmes, who had long faithfully discharged those offices. The first college graduate from Pomfret was, probably, Chester, son of Rev. Ebenezer Williams, who was graduated from Yale in 1735. Darius, son of Nathaniel Sessions, was graduated in 1737. Thomas, son of William Williams, was a member of the class of 1738.

## XII.

UNITED LIBRARY ASSOCIATION. POMFRET WOLF-HUNT. A  
POMFRET LEGEND, LEGALLY ESTABLISHED.

**P**OMFRET, in 1740, was a prosperous, populous and influential township. Her western territory was as yet but partially subdued, rough ridges obtruded among fertile farms and valleys, and one



oburate old wolf still infested her borders, but despite these drawbacks she had made great material progress, surpassed other Windham county towns in cultivation and refinement, and especially distinguished herself by forming the first library association in Eastern Connecticut. Public libraries were then very rare. Books were costly and money scarce. A small library had been collected at Yale College. Library associations were formed in Lyme and Guilford in 1738, but Hartford, New London, Norwich and other leading towns had made, as yet, no provision for supplying the public with reading. In Massachusetts, associations for procuring books were becoming very common and thence spread into the border towns settled by that Colony. A grand Union Library Association, embracing the citizens of Woodstock, Pomfret and Killingly, was projected, perhaps by Colonel John Chandler and the Rev. Messrs. Williams and Stiles, all distinguished as the warm friends of learning and literature. A meeting for this object was held September 25, 1739, at the house of Mr. Ebenezer Williams. Very great interest was manifested. Many prominent men from the north part of Windham County were present. Colonel Chandler was there, as fresh, vigorous and eager in promoting intellectual improvement as when fifty years before he taught the Woodstock children how "to write and cypher." The ministers of the respective towns and parishes were present—Williams of Pomfret, Stiles of Woodstock, Fisk of Killingly, Cabot of Thompson and Avery of Mortlake. Woodstock was further represented by John May, Benjamin Child and Pennel Bowen; Pomfret by Abiel Cheney, Ebenezer Holbrook, Joseph Dana, Joseph Bowman, Ephraim Hide and her two physicians; Mortlake by William Williams; Thompson by Hezekiah Sabin and Joseph Cady, the richest man in the parish, together with William Chandler and the much-tryed Samuel Morris from the banks of the Quinebaug. The Hon. John Chandler was appointed moderator, Marston Cabot, scribe, and a most elaborate Triplicate Covenant formally adopted. Each individual covenanted, under his own hand and seal, to pay a certain specified sum, "to be used and improved to purchase, procure or buy a library, or number or collection of such useful and profitable English books as the said covenanters by their major vote taken and given . . . shall be agreed and concluded upon, and for no other use or purpose whatever—which said Library shall be called and known by the name of, The United English Library for the Propagation of Christian and Useful Knowledge, and the covenanters or proprietors thereof shall be called and known by the name of—The United Society or Company for Propagating Christian and Useful Knowledge; In the towns of

Woodstock, Pomfret, Mortlake and Killingly and west part of Thompson Parish, as aforesaid."

Articles of regulation and government—corresponding in length with the *name* of the society—were next discussed, "condescended to, agreed and fully concluded," as follows:—

"First. That the said Library or collection of books . . . shall be kept in one place within the limits of the town of Pomfret, or towns aforesaid, for the common use, benefit and advantage of the said society or company, and those of their heirs, successors or assigns . . . who shall be allowed to take and hold interest therein.

Secondly. That the Rev. Mr. Ebenezer Williams shall be the first keeper of said Library, and to continue in said post until the society . . . shall order otherwise, or shall or do by their choice as need may require, appoint another person, who shall be a proprietor of said Library and an inhabitant of one of the towns aforesaid, to be the keeper thereof—which keeper for the time being shall and hereby is obliged to keep said Library clean and in good order, and shall deliver out and receive in the books thereto belonging. . .

Thirdly. The said society or company shall or may, as occasion requires, meet together from time to time to make such necessary rules and orders as they may apprehend will best promote the good end and design of ye Covenant—in order whereto . . . the Rev. Mr. Marston Cabot shall have power to call such meetings, . . . appointing the time and place and occasion of said meeting; and a certificate thereof under his hand, directed to the several and respective members of said society, ten days before the meeting . . . shall be accounted a due and sufficient warning.

Fourthly. That a book of a Quarto Volume, clean paper, bound with parchment, and to contain three or four Quire, be bought for the use of the society or company, and be kept by a suitable person, who shall from time to time be chosen scribe of said company; wherein shall be entered by him, in presence of two of the company . . . all the votes, acts, proceedings and orders of said society or company. . .

Fifthly. That no acts, orders, votes, or proceedings of said society or company shall be esteemed good and valid, unless they are made or done by the major part of the proprietors present at said meeting, to be computed always by their interest, . . . [nor] unless there shall be at least two-thirds of the covenanters or proprietors present.

Sixthly. That three covenants of this tenor and date shall be duly executed, . . . a copy of them to be transcribed or entered in the beginning of the Book wherein the votes and doings of said company are to be recorded, . . . after which the said three covenants shall be lodged in the hands of such persons, members of said society, as they shall choose or appoint to keep the same until further order be taken.

Finally. It is agreed, in order to the making additions to said Library, that such other persons as shall be desirous to join with the present covenanters, and shall be approved by a major vote of the company . . . shall and may be admitted and received members thereof in as full and ample manner as the present covenanters, and shall have and enjoy equal privileges and advantages with them."

Fifteen gentlemen, mostly residents of Pomfret, in accordance with the final article, were then admitted members of the society, together with those previously covenanting. The subjoined list gives the names and subscriptions of the Original members of the "United Society or Company for propagating Christian and useful Knowledge" in the northeast corner of Connecticut:—

"John Chandler, Esq., twenty pounds. Benjamin Child, gentleman, ten  
Abel Stiles, clerk, thirty pounds. pounds.  
John May, gentleman, fifteen pounds.

Penuel Bowen, pelt-maker, twelve pounds.	William Chandler, gentleman, fifteen pounds.
Thomas Mather, physician, fifteen pounds.	Samuel Morris, Jun., trader, ten pounds.
Abiel Cheney, blacksmith, ten pounds.	Hezekiah Sabin, yeoman, ten pounds.
Ebenezer Holbrook, yeoman, twenty pounds.	Noah Sabin, yeoman, twenty pounds.
Joseph Bowman, yeoman, twenty pounds.	Edward Payson, yeoman, ten pounds.
Joseph Dana, yeoman, ten pounds.	Joseph Craft, yeoman, ten pounds.
Ephraim Hide, yeoman, fifteen pounds.	Timothy Sabin, yeoman, ten pounds.
Ephraim Avery, clerk, twenty pounds.	Jacob Dana, yeoman, ten pounds.
William Williams, yeoman, twenty pounds.	Isaac Dana, yeoman, ten pounds.
Ebenezer Williams, clerk, forty pounds.	Darius Sessions, twenty pounds.
John Fisk, clerk, twenty pounds.	Seth Paine, ten pounds.
Marston Cabot, clerk, twenty pounds.	Samuel Perrin, fifteen pounds.
Joseph Cady, Esq., sixteen pounds.	Nehemiah Sabin, ten pounds.
John Hallowell, physician, sixteen pounds.	Samuel Sumner, ten pounds.
	Benjamin Griffin, twenty pounds.
	John Payson, ten pounds.
	Samuel Dana, ten pounds."

One-half of the sums subscribed was to be paid over, "the twentieth day of May next ensuing;" the remainder, a year later—"all in good bills of public credit passable within the Province of the Massachusetts Bay." Arrangements were made for procuring the books as speedily as possible. "Dr. Guise's Paraphrase on ye 4 Evangelists," kindly presented to the company by the author, and "Stackhouse's Body of Divinity," purchased of Mr. Sessions, formed the foundation of the Library. The remainder was ordered from England. The society's second meeting was held at the house of the Hon. John Chandler, December 24, 1740. Ebenezer Corbin was admitted a member upon the payment of ten pounds. Peter Perrin took the place of Mr. Morris. Mr. Williams was directed "to write a letter of thanks to ye Rev. Dr. Guise for his kind present, and procure boxes to keep ye books in." The first installment of forty volumes had already arrived, and was followed, in 1741, by a much larger number. A full catalogue of the books was taken, and is given in the appendix. The sum of £418 12s. was paid out for them by Mr. Williams, who was commissioned by the society, "to cover ye rest of the books as far as ye overplus of ye money will reach." An assessment of six pounds for every ten subscribed was found needful to make up the depreciation of currency.

Notwithstanding all the pains taken to organize this company, its continuance in its original form was found impracticable. Roads were bad, and often impassable, and the residents of the more distant towns found it often impossible to attend appointed meetings, and very difficult to procure the books and return them in season. After the death of Colonel Chandler, a separation was deemed advisable. At a meeting of the "United Company for propagating useful and Christian Know-

ledge in Pomfret, Woodstock, &c., met at the Rev. Mr. Williams', June 7, 1745":—

"Voted, That the society do agree to divide ye books into two parts, viz., one part to Pomfret and Mortlake, and the other to Woodstock and Killingly, according to the interest that the respective proprietors in said towns have therein, and to hold their property according to the abovesaid division, any vote to the contrary notwithstanding."

Thirty-nine volumes were then assigned to Woodstock and Killingly, and the remainder allowed to Pomfret and Mortlake. The residents of the latter towns at once renewed the covenant, obliging themselves to keep that part together which belonged to the towns in which they lived as a United Library, and to remain under the same regulations and restrictions in general as the former company, with these additional conditions:—

"1. That the said Library shall be governed by votes, according to ye interest which the several persons or members have therein.

2. That no member be allowed to dispose of his right out of said towns at all; nor in said towns, but with the consent of the majority of ye proprietors.

3. That each proprietor have liberty to dispose of his right upon his decease, to any one of his heirs living in said towns.

4. That no member be admitted out of said towns.

5. That, inasmuch as the Library is diminished by ye division, the several proprietors shall take out books in proportion to their subscription, or else all shall be obliged to come up to what a twenty pound subscription paid; which addition shall be expended for purchasing more books—and that the Rev. Mr. Williams, Mr. Avery and Deacon Holbrook be a committee to lay out the money that shall be paid for this end in such books as they shall see fit.

6. That a twenty-pound right shall take out two books at a time, though but one of them a folio.

7. That an octavo shall be returned in two months, a quarto in three months and a folio in four months.

8. That if any book be abused in the hands of any one of said company, he shall be obliged to make it good.

9. That that article in the covenant which speaks of three of ye same tenor being necessary to be kept, be revoked; one being kept by the scribe and recorded, being sufficient.

10. That Eph. Avery be scribe of said company till otherwise ordered; and shall call meetings on occasion agreeable to ye covenant

11. That the committee before mentioned shall have power to admit new members in the room of any old ones or such as were never members before, as they shall think fit; i. e., within the towns aforesaid; but no new member shall be admitted without paying equal to what a twenty-pound subscription paid.

12. That Mr. Samuel Sumner be keeper of said Library till the company shall agree otherwise—and that Mr. Williams accordingly deliver him the books, together with ye case made to keep y<sup>m</sup> in."

"The United Society or Company for Propagating Christian and Useful Knowledge in the towns of Pomfret and Mortlake," now numbered twenty-one members. Ebenezer Grosvenor, Nathaniel Holmes, Nathaniel Sessions and Joseph Holland had been previously admitted. Ephraim Hide now resigned his right to Abiel Lyon. The usefulness and popularity of the Library were greatly augmented by its restriction



to more convenient limits. New books were from time to time added, less theological and polemic in character, and many residents of Pomfret gladly availed themselves of its privileges. The affairs of the Company were well managed by a faithful and efficient committee, and its membership in time embraced all the leading men of the township. Pomfret's Library became one of her most cherished institutions, and maintained and extended her reputation for intelligence and culture.

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At the time of the formation of the United Library Association, that famous historical personage known as "Putnam's Wolf" was making much disturbance. No mythical phantom, like the she-wolf of Roman tradition, but a veritable flesh and blood denizen of Windham County—the story of her exploits, pursuit and capture is known to the whole civilized world, and her den in Pomfret included among the notable places in America. Part of her fame is doubtless due to the subsequent celebrity of her conqueror. Had Putnam remained obscure, his wolf might have been long ago forgotten, but she unquestionably displayed great prowess and tenacity, and has fairly won a place in historic annals.

Wolves had abounded in every Windham County town at their first settlement, but had gradually disappeared with advancing civilization. Indians Tom and Jeremy had routed them in Plainfield and Killingly. Woodstock's last reported wolf was shot by Pembascus in 1732; Ashford's succumbed in 1735, leaving Pomfret's in sole possession of the field. A craggy, precipitous hill-range, bristling with jagged rocks and tangled forests, south of the Mashamoquet, and between the Newichewanna and Blackwell's Brook, was her favorite place of residence, where she enjoyed the privilege of entire seclusion and easy access to the richest farms of Pomfret and Mortlake. The grave and reverend seigniors who met with Mr. Williams to devise means for propagating Christian and useful knowledge, were but half a mile from the lurking-place of this surviving representative of barbarism, and doubtless discussed the exploits of the wolf as well as the projected library. For years, this creature ranged and ravaged the country. There was not a farm or door-yard safe from her incursions. Innumerable sheep, lambs, kids and fowls had fallen into her clutches. Little children were scared by her out of sleep and senses; boys and girls feared to go to school or drive the cows home, and lonely women at night trembled for absent husbands and children. In summer, she was wont to repair to wilder regions northward, returning in autumn with a young family to her favorite haunt in Pomfret. These cubs were soon shot by watchful

hunters, but the more wary mother resisted every effort. She evaded traps, outwitted dogs and made herself, in the words of her biographer, "an intolerable nuisance."

The great increase of stock, following the sale and occupation of Belcher's tract, opened a new source of supply to this enterprising and keen-sighted animal. Israel Putnam's farm was only separated by a deep, narrow valley from her favorite hill-side. This young farmer had devoted himself to the cultivation of his land with much skill and energy, and within two or three years had erected a house and out buildings, broken up land for corn and grain, set out fruit trees and collected many valuable cattle and sheep. This fine flock soon caught the fancy of his appreciative neighbor, and one morning some "seventy sheep and goats were reported killed, besides many lambs and kids torn and wounded." Putnam was greatly exasperated by this loss and butchery. He was not one to submit tamely to such inflictions. From his boyhood he had been distinguished for courage and reckless daring. He was a bold rider, a practiced and successful hunter. He had a bloodhound of superior strength and sagacity. His stock was very dear to him, and he at once resolved to rid Pomfret of this nuisance. For books, at this time, young Putnam cared little. The "United Library Association" had no attraction for him, but he was very eager to enter into combination with others for the destruction of this "pernicious animal." With five of his neighbors, he agreed to hunt the wolf continuously by turns, till they had caught and killed her.

How long they watched and waited is not known. The final hunt is believed to have occurred in the winter of 1742-3. A light snow-fall the night preceding enabled the watchful hunters to trace the wolf far westward over hill and valley, and thence back to her lair in Pomfret. The report of their success in tracking the enemy had preceded them, and men and boys, with dogs and guns, hurried out to meet the returning hunters and join in the pursuit and capture. The track led onward into the heart of that savage fastness, never before penetrated by white man. John Sharpe—a lad of seventeen, grand-son of the first William Sharpe of Mashamoquet—ran, boy-like, in advance of the others, following the trail up the icy crag as it wound on between overhanging rocks, gnarled stumps and fallen tree-trunks to a small opening among the granite boulders of the hill-side—the mouth, apparently, of a narrow cave or passage, tunneling far down into the depths of the earth. A joyful shout from the lad announced the discovery of the wolf's hiding-place. The news soon spread through the neighborhood, bringing new actors and spectators. Great was the interest and excitement. The wolf was *trapped*, but how could she be *taken*? The day was spent in fruitless efforts to force her from her position. Hounds

were sent in but came back cowed and wounded. Straw and brimstone were burned in the cavern's mouth without effect. Secure in her rock-bound fortress, the enemy disdained to parley or surrender. Night brought with it new fears and anxieties. The cave might have some outlet by which the wolf might steal away in the darkness. After all their efforts and anticipated triumph, it was possible that their foe might even now escape them.

It does not appear that Putnam had joined in the hunt or siege, or that his absence was noted or regretted. The future world-renowned General was then a person of very little consequence. He was a young man and a stranger. He was not connected with any of Pomfret's old families. He lived in Mortlake, with whose inhabitants Pomfret had as little concern as possible. He was not a member of the church, school-committee or Library Association. He was only a rough young farmer making his own way in the world, with a good eye for stock and a very superior *blood-hound*, which in this moment of despondency was remembered and summoned to the rescue.

But the obscure young farmer of 1743, had every distinguishing characteristic of the brave "Old Put" of "'76." A crisis brought him, at once, "to the front." Emergency and peril proved him a leader. With dog and gun he instantly obeyed the summons. His coming changed the aspect of affairs. Doubt and fear vanished before his eagerness and impetuosity. Not a moment was to be lost. The wolf must be routed at once, whatever the hazard. If she would not come to them, they must go to her. The passage must be stormed, and its hidden citadel carried. If dog and negro "declined the hazardous service," Putnam himself was ready for the onset. Remonstrance and representation of danger were unheeded. Divesting himself of coat and waistcoat, with a rope fastened around his body and a blazing torch in his hand, he slowly crawled down the black, icy, narrow passage—"a mansion of horror," unvisited before but by "monsters of the desert"—and at its farthest extremity descried the glaring eye-balls of his terrified adversary. Drawn back by those without, he descended a second time with torch and weapon, and with one dexterous shot brought down the wolf as she prepared to take the defensive, "and the people above, with no small exultation, dragged them both out together." Pomfret's last wolf was destroyed, and her most famous hero brought to her knowledge.

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Soon after the subsidence of the wolf-hunt excitement, a domestic tragedy occurred in Pomfret awakening a very deep and painful interest, but unlike Putnam's famous exploit soon sinking into oblivion,

or preserved only by dim local tradition. These whispered stories told of shame, crime and remorse in one of Pomfret's proudest old families; of a poor little human waif prematurely forced into the world, and cradled within the blazing coals on the hearth-stone of its mother's chamber. A sister of the child's mother and the notorious physician, Hallowell, aided in the transaction, which was utterly unsuspected by any other member of the household. The young mother was soon after attacked by fever and died after a short illness. No deed could have been more completely hidden, or less likely to be discovered. Mother and child were dead, and the only persons cognizant of the facts had most vital interest in their concealment. But the Nemesis which avenges household wrongs was not to be averted, and superstition proved more powerful than fear of exposure and punishment. Night after night, in her solitary chamber, the surviving sister was awakened by the rattling of the rings on which her bed-curtains were suspended, a ghostly knell continuing and intensifying till she was convinced of its preternatural origin; and at length, in response to her agonized entreaties, the spirit of her dead sister made known to her, "That she could not rest in her grave till her crime was made public." The conscience-stricken girl hastened to make the prescribed reparation. Family friends were called together; the birth and fate of the child revealed; its father designated; the physician denounced. The guilty tale was published to the world. Then, saith the legend, "Hallowell fled his country," and the ghostly visitations ceased.

This story, received in childhood from ancient grand-dames, uncredited and half-unheeded, is confirmed by very unexpected testimony. Records, which have proved baseless so many an old-wives' tale, substantiate this in the main facts. At the March session of the Superior Court of Windham County, 1747, John Hallowell, physician, was arraigned for procuring abortion upon a young lady, a daughter of one of the leading families of Pomfret, whose death had soon ensued. His plea, that the principal witness "was involved in the same affair," was not admitted. He was adjudged guilty and sentenced "to be returned to the common gaol till the first day of April, and then from ten to six, P. M., be caused to sit in y<sup>e</sup> gallows in some public convenient place for that purpose to be erected, for the space of two hours, with a rope visibly hanging about his neck, and that he then be whipt on his naked body twenty-nine lashes, and then remanded back to prison till the farther action of the Court at its next session."

"Moved by the law of self-preservation," the prisoner, by the assistance of friends, managed to escape from the gaol before the time appointed for the execution of his sentence, and fled to Rhode Island, from whence, "an exile, destitute of everything but want and misery,"



he sent—October, 1747—a most pitiful petition to the General Assembly, begging that his sentence might be remitted and he permitted “to return to an unhappy wife and seven unfortunate children, who not participating in the guilt had too deeply tasted of the punishment.” Stephen Hopkins, Resolved Waterman, Obadiah Brown, Benjamin Wilkinson and other large-hearted and compassionate Rhode-Islanders, testified to the medical skill and standing of the unhappy refugee and begged that mercy might be extended to him. Their requests were denied. So heinous a crime could not in those days be overlooked and forgiven, and Hallowell never dared to return to Connecticut. An attempt to implicate and punish the “fast young man” involved in this affair—a representative of another of Pomfret’s first and wealthiest families—failed for want of evidence.

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### XIII.

SETTLEMENT OF MR. THROOP. WORCESTER COUNTY ORGANIZED.  
DEATH OF MR. THROOP. DISAGREEMENT WITH COLONEL  
CHANDLER. SETTLEMENT OF MR. STILES.

THE people of Woodstock, though not usually inclined to unanimity of sentiment, were now agreed in two particulars—dislike for their repudiated minister and regard for his newly-elected successor. Fifty-nine out of sixty had formally expressed their dissatisfaction with Mr. Dwight; seventy-five out of seventy-six had voted in favor of Mr. Throop, offering him £300, for settlement, £100 salary, and £10 for firewood. February 20, 1727, Mr. Throop signified his acceptance of these terms, whereupon the town ordered its selectmen to send a notification to Mr. Dwight, “That Mr. Throop’s family are expected immediately, and that it is very necessary that the pew built by the town for the minister’s family, in which Mr. Dwight and his family now sit, should be freed from encumbrance (by their not sitting there any longer) for the reception of Mr. Throop’s family.” This summary ejection was not calculated to allay the “resentments” of Mr. Dwight, or facilitate a peaceable settlement. A month later, the church requested the town’s concurrence in calling a council to consider Mr. Dwight’s dismissal and Mr. Throop’s calling. The town refused to consider the former question as “not for the honor of the town, would delay the ordination of Mr. Throop which was very needful, considering that the ordinances had not been administered for nearly twelve

months, and children born continued unbaptized;" but urged "the momentous affair" of ordination with all convenient speed, and offered all needful assistance. A serious obstacle intervened. As no council had yet formally dismissed Mr. Dwight from his ministerial office, he refused to give up the church covenant and records in his possession. The church thereupon drew up an agreement, "That the government and discipline of this church should in all respects and regards be managed and carried on after the Congregational way in which said church was gathered"—following the Cambridge Platform with other Massachusetts churches. This covenant was signed by Mr. Throop and the brethren of the church, and Mr. Throop ordained as pastor of the church, May 24, 1727. The ordination sermon preached by the Rev. Mr. Thayer, was afterwards published, each person assessed for town rates having one book allowed him. Little is known of Mr. Throop, save that he was then twenty-six years of age, a native of Massachusetts and graduate of Harvard College, and won at once the love and confidence of the people of Woodstock. The only drawback to their unwonted harmony was the continued residence of Mr. Dwight. Debarred from the ministerial pew and church privileges, Mr. Dwight repaired with his family to worship with the church at Pomfret, but it is said "that his former parishioners interfered to bar him from the Lord's table." After some years of bickering and recrimination, a council, convened November 16, 1729, succeeded in some adjustment. Mr. Dwight was accused of rashness of speech and temper, leanings towards Saybrook Platform and dishonesty in land-dealing. The latter charges he denied, but signed "an acknowledgment of rashness, want of patience and meekness under provocations," whereupon he was restored to church-fellowship. Mr. Dwight soon afterwards removed with his family to Thompson Parish, then newly incorporated, and cultivated the wild land, whose purchase had so offended his people. In 1735, he was installed over the West church in Dedham, where it is said "his literary character was highly esteemed," but finally returned to spend a quiet old age in Thompson. The Woodstock church records retained by him were never returned.

Peace being at length restored, Woodstock was enabled to give more attention to public affairs and her own internal improvement. Though so remote from the seat of Government, this town was well apprized of what was passing at head-quarters and was ready to bear her part, or express her opinion, on all needful occasions. One of the most troublesome and controverted questions in Massachusetts at that day, related to the salary of its governor, the amount and mode of raising it. Woodstock, in October, 1728, instructed her representative "not to come into a stated salary for governors for the time being, but left it to

his discretion whether to come into a salary for a limited time but not to exceed twelve months." They also voted, "To receive her proportion, viz., £240 of the £60,000, loan lately emitted by the General Court." February, 1730, the town agreed to pay £30, "towards enabling the agents of the House of Representatives to manage affairs entrusted them at the Court of Great Britain, relating to our liberties and privileges granted by charter—provided a considerable number of other towns come into some method."

Their own need of different county accommodations greatly interested the citizens of Woodstock. A movement for this object was initiated as early as 1721, and efforts were renewed in following years. Colonel John Chandler was very urgent and persevering in pressing this suit. The town "saw no reason why it should not be made with other towns into a separate county." In 1731, their efforts were successful, and Woodstock, with many towns north of it, was incorporated into Worcester County. Colonel Chandler, as leading citizen, was now invested with its highest honors. Already colonel of its militia, he was now appointed judge of probate and chief justice of the Court of Common Pleas. His new position brought him yet more prominently into public life and made him the chief personage on all state occasions. In 1734, he presided at the opening of Worcester's first court-house. In 1735, he had the honor of welcoming and entertaining his Excellency, Governor Belcher, when on "a tedious and difficult journey" to Albany, to hold a conference with the Six Nations. Though now much occupied with official duties and responsibilities, he still retained his interest and residence in Woodstock, and his counsel was sought in many cases of difficulty by neighboring Connecticut towns. John Chandler, Jun., now appointed clerk of Worcester County Court, removed his residence to the town of Worcester. The distinguished position held by the Chandler family, with the general prosperity and advancement of the town, gave Woodstock a very prominent place in Worcester County. In wealth it was only exceeded by the older towns, Leicester and Mendon; paying a tax of £32 for Worcester's Court-house.

Various town matters were now discussed and settled. Schools were as yet entirely inadequate, though provision had been ordered "for introducing children in reading English in divers parts of the town." At a town-meeting, June 8, 1730, it was voted, "To build a school-house for the accommodation of poor children, not hindering subordinate schools." Forty-two persons at once manifested their dissent from this vote. A new meeting was called, at which over a hundred voters were present. The new school-house was countermanded, and orders given to enlarge the old one. A school-master was hired for a year,

to keep six months in the school-house; the other six, in three parts of the town. In 1732, it was voted, "To build a new school-house in the north part of Woodstock." The question of building one in the west part was next considered. The school-masters at this date were William Lyon, John May, Benjamin Griggs, Jonathan Morse and Thaddeus Mason.\* John Stoyell of Pomfret was "dismissed from being school-master" in 1734. The first "practitioner of physic" of whom there is record in Woodstock, was Dr. Thomas Stimson, who appears to have been burdened with debt and not wholly reputable in character. "Dr. Perren" also appears as a medical practitioner. Captain Jonathan Payson and Joseph Wright were appointed tavern-keepers in 1734. Deacon William Lyon was sent as representative to the General Court for many successive years.

The meeting-house, so carefully built, required occasional renovation. In 1728, it "was finished with good lime-mortar." Steps and "ruff" were soon after "pointed," and leaking turret repaired. James Horsmor and family were allowed to sit in the pew that was his father's—"not incommoding their mother, the relict-widow of the deceased." James Corbin's pew was assigned after his decease to Jonathan Bugbee. John May and Ephriam Child were denied the coveted privilege of building pews in the gallery. In 1734, the house was re-seated, under the supervision of Deacons Johnson and Chamberlain, Captain Payson and Lieutenant Morris; rules observed—age, usefulness, and charges borne by taxes—the hindmost seat in the body to be reserved for negroes. Black broadcloth was ordered for a pall, and Isaiah Tiffany chosen coffin-maker. A sum of money was also allowed for fencing the burying-ground.

Woodstock, with other towns, was greatly incommoded by the demoralized condition of the currency. Massachusetts was flooded with paper bills of credit, many of them greatly depreciated in value or wholly worthless. To protect the church from loss in this way, it

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\* The following memorandum of scholars taught by this early teacher, was found among the papers of the Rev. Abiel Holmes, D. D., of Cambridge. As Darius Sessions of Pomfret—afterwards deputy-governor of Rhode Island—and some other non-residents appear among these pupils, it is quite probable that this was a select or private school—the precursor of the future Woodstock Academy.

"Schollers taught at Woodstock by Thaddeus Mason, Esq., in 1728:"—

"Names of Schollars I taught at Woodstock in ye year 1729, etc., viz.: From 10th of November, 1729, to 1st of April, 1730:—

John Chandler, Gardiner Chandler, Mary Chandler, Esther Chandler, Moses Lyon, Nehe'h Lyon, John May, Jos'a May, Caleb May, Steph'n May, Thos. May, Benj. Sanger, Jno. Sanger, David Holmes, Josiah Holmes, Caleb Johnson, Peter Johnson, Nath'n Payson, Asa Payson, Joseph Bartholomew, Jno. Bartholomew, Sam'l Bartholomew, Jedid'h Bartholomew, Dan'l Abbut, Jos. Abbut, Nehe'h Bugbee, Zeruliah Bugbee, Elenor Bugbee, Jos. Barnard, Samuel Barnard, Eben'r Barnard, Abner Barnard, Edw'd Morris, Isa'e Morris, Grace Morris, Beth'h Morris, Josha Tucker, Benj. Tucker, Jos. Willson, Jac'b Willson, Munasses Horsmor, Uriah Horsmor, Jos. Horsmor, Nath'l Child, Henry Child, Benj'n Child, Jesse Carpenter, Benj'n Carpenter, Jos. Carpenter, Dan'l Mascraft, Jacob Mascraft, Darius Sessions, Josiah Cummings, Daniel Davis, Eben'r Smith, Nath'l Kenney, James Leavens, Silas Bowen, Oliver Barrett, Peter Morse, Nath'l Ainsworth, Isa'e Hemensway, Benj'n Thayer, Sam'l Lillie, Isaiah Tiffany, Eben'r Phillips, Eunice Draper, Nath'n Sanger."



was accordingly voted, "That each member pay three shillings per annum for the support of the Lord's table; that no one give any money but what is current and passable; and in order to know what each member pays, he shall put it in a paper with his name and the quantity of money." These currency fluctuations made it very difficult to arrange Mr. Throop's salary. The amount promised was soon greatly lowered in value. A subscription was ordered "from such persons as attend divine service here on Lord's day that don't belong to the town, . . . all unpapered money to belong to Mr. Throop, exclusive of his salary." This proving insufficient, a committee was chosen to discourse with the minister, but "he would not take anything if it came hardly." This moderation made the people more anxious to make up the deficiency. Colonel Chandler was requested to inquire of Hon. Thomas Hutchinson, Thomas Fitch and Edward Winslow, "the difference in value of paper money since 1726." The difference between paper and silver money in 1731, was found to be £44 7s. 6d., which was immediately made up to Mr. Throop. Woodstock "enjoyed abundance of peace" during Mr. Throop's ministrations, which were unhappily terminated by his sudden death, September 10, 1735. The town assumed the charge of the funeral expenses, allowed Mrs. Throop thirty pounds for mourning for herself and children, continued the salary till the following March, and procured suitable grave-stones for the beloved and lamented pastor. The deacons were directed to supply the pulpit "after the neighboring ministers have favored us." One hundred and sixty-eight boys and a hundred and seventy girls were baptized by Mr. Throop during this eight years' ministry.

The settlement of a new minister involved the town in fresh difficulties and dissensions, aggravated by personal feuds and jealousies. A serious disagreement had arisen between Colonel Chandler and his fellow-townsmen. For more than forty years he had served the town in various public capacities, with very slight pecuniary recompense, and he now refused to give up the town records in his hands till his demands were satisfied. His sons, now grown up, and many family and personal friends supported him in this demand, so that it was impossible to unite in choice of a minister, or any public measure. In January, 1736, the deacons were discharged from the care of supplying the pulpit, and Captain Jonathan Payson, Ephraim Child, Daniel Lyon, Lieutenant Morris and Deacon Carpenter appointed committee for that purpose. Three candidates had now been heard—John Hovey, John Cushing and Hezekiah Manning—and in case one of these could not be procured, the person who went for them was ordered "to take advice who to bring up, so that there may be no disappointment as to preaching, i. e., that we be not destitute any Sabbath day." At the

town-meeting in March, in place of Colonel Chandler, who had long served as moderator in such meetings, "William Lyon was chosen by a great majority." Isaiah Tiffany was sworn in town-clerk in place of John Chandler, Jun.; David Holmes, town treasurer. The selectmen chosen were Captain Payson, Lieutenant Morris, Cornet Isaiah Tiffany, Sergeants Ebenezer Child and Isaac Johnson. Efforts to obtain possession of the records occupied the following meetings. Colonel Chandler refused to relinquish them, "because proprietor's concerns are mixt with ye town's." A committee was sent to wait upon him. Colonel Chandler did not desire to be his own judge, but was willing to submit to judicious, indifferent persons, what he deserved for past services; thought it would be best to transcribe what belongs to proprietors from the town books, but could give no guess what it would amount to. The town deferred action and desired him "to set some certainness to his demand." Colonel Chandler replies, "That he has written two hundred and ninety-seven pages, worth twelve-pence a page, and considers twenty pounds a very modest demand, and is willing to submit it to others." The town demurred and offered ten pounds. Colonel Chandler thought it would be but trifling with the town to write more upon the subject. At a town-meeting, June 4, the question is put, "Whether the town would be at the charge of transcribing proprietors' concerns from town affairs," and answered in the negative. The selectmen were ordered, "To get and procure town books from Hon. John Chandler as speedily as they can by the most prudential ways and means as they shall judge best."

While this controversy was in progress, "the committee about supplying pulpit could not agree upon any method." Mr. Jonathan Bugbee making "a generous offer, that he would supply it for two Sabbaths at his own cost and charge, the town thankfully accepted." Soon after this, town and church concurred in calling Mr. John Hovey to become their pastor. William Lyon, John Johnson, Eliphalet Carpenter, Nathaniel Sanger, Benjamin Child, Joseph Lyon, John and David Holmes and Samuel Chamberlain were chosen in behalf of the church to make needful arrangements. June 29, the question of settlement was largely and stormily debated in town-meeting. Some irregularity in the proceedings called out a very strong opposition. A majority voted to give Mr. Hovey four hundred pounds settlement in three payments, and a hundred and fifty pounds, salary. Eighteen persons at once signified their dissent "from the election that had been made of Mr. John Hovey, especially the raising a settlement and salary . . . they being so irregular and

contrary to law." The following letter was also sent by Colonel Chandler:—

"To the Town-clerk of Woodstock:—

Sir,—I desire my dissent from the votes of the town passed 7th and 29th of June, 1736, relating to Mr. John Hovey, may be entered in the records. I judge them to be altogether unlawful and injurious to the town for the following reasons, viz.: Because, as I apprehend, the whole of the proceedings both in church and town are the product of arbitrary or mobbish principles which will be easy to make appear, and the foundation being laid upon the sand, the superstructure cannot long continue, which I shall be ready to make manifest and explain when there shall be occasion. Matt. xii: 24-27."

On the receipt of this letter, a meeting was straightway warned, "to appoint agents to demand, sue for and recover the town-book of records." Deacon William Lyon, Captain Payson and Lieutenant Morris were chosen for this service. The proprietors also appointed agents to get possession of their records. Mr. Hovey declining the call, Mr. Whittlesey next came as a candidate, and soon received a call from the church. At a town meeting, November 18, 1736, it was agreed "to choose the moderator by the sign of holding up the hand. Then, Captain Jonathan Payson was nominated and chosen by a major vote and took his place accordingly." The town agreed to concur with the church in choosing Mr. Samuel Whittlesey to be their minister by a great majority. Vote decided by polling. It was also voted by a large majority to give four hundred pounds in bills of public credit for settlement, and one hundred and fifty pounds salary. "Though not so much as one person" entered their dissent at this meeting, many were dissatisfied and called another meeting at the close of lecture, December 29. Captain Payson was again chosen moderator. The law of the Province, and also the law relating to the Choice of Ministers, and the proceedings of the former meeting, were read. The warrant was read several times (being a full meeting). The moderator offered to the inhabitants, that they should give their objections to Mr. Whittlesey in writing, signed with their respective names, in order to be laid before a council of churches, but though the offer was many times renewed, no person offered anything from first to last. Still the matter was not settled. Suspicions were afloat as to Mr. Whittlesey's "principles concerning church government," and a committee appointed to inquire into them. It found him unwilling to pledge himself to be governed by Cambridge Platform. After some debate and negotiations, it was referred to the town, "Whether it received Mr. Whittlesey's answer which he sent in his two last letters, to be in the negative?—and it passed in the affirmative," to the apparent satisfaction of all parties.

Efforts for compromising the difficulty with Colonel Chandler were now resumed. The town had grown cool enough to see the justice of his demand and the folly of opposing it. At the town-meeting,

March 7, he was again chosen moderator by a great majority. Twenty-five pounds for serving as town-clerk, twenty-six years, and four pounds for "waiting upon commissioners," were soon afterward allowed him. A deed of Rocky Hill in the rear of his home-lot, was also confirmed to him; and thus all differences between Woodstock and her most distinguished citizen were amicably settled. A mournful casualty occurring about this time may have had some effect in mollifying resentments and effecting a reconciliation between the parties. Sarah Chandler Wright, a cousin of Colonel John Chandler, with her son, eleven years of age, and a servant, were all consumed "in the dissolution of their house by fire." This event was thus reported to the Boston Gazette :—

"*March 24, 1737.* On Wednesday, 16th, at night, a very sorrowful Providence happened at Woodstock. A very fine house belonging to John Chandler, Esq., Jun., of Worcester, in occupation of Lieutenant Jos. Wright, caught on fire and was consumed with all the furniture and provisions, together with three persons—Mr. Wright's wife, son, and a negro servant. We hear that Mrs. Wright had got out and escaped the flames, but perceiving her dear child left behind, out of her tender affection and concern for him ventured in again to save his life, but in the attempt lost her own."

Peace being restored; two hundred pounds voted for making and mending highways; David and John Holmes allowed to work out their proportion of highway tax by mending and repairing the bridge near their house till the town should order otherwise; the constable excused from paying Deacon Timothy Manning's rates because of his long sickness before his death, and freed from the responsibility of Benjamin Coggeshall's and Robert Wilson's, "by reason of their absconding themselves before he had a chance to get them"—the town renewed its search for a minister. March 28, 1737, voted, "To concur with what the church laid before the town, viz.: To send to New Haven to invite Mr. Abel Stiles to preach with them by way of probation; and if he can't be obtained, to send for Mr. Hawes; and if *he* can't be obtained, to send for Mr. Swift; and if *he* can't be obtained, to send for Mr. Brown." Deacons Lyon and Johnson, Captain John May, Jonathan Bugbee and Lieutenant Morris were chosen a committee to supply the pulpit. Mr. Stiles *was* obtained, and made a favorable impression. Great unanimity was now manifested and a desire that all persons might be satisfied. At a town-meeting, May 9, it was agreed, "That if there be ten that appear to desire to hear farther, the town are willing to oblige them." Ten not appearing, the question was put, "Whether the town is so well satisfied with the ministerial performances and qualifications of Mr. Abel Stiles, that they are willing the church should make choice of him for a minister? and it passed in the affirmative" by fifty-one to four. Further acquaintance increased the popularity of the candidate. He was a young man of much ability and culture, son of John Stiles



of Windsor and brother of the Rev. Isaac Stiles, father of the distinguished president of Yale College. In one respect alone, he was unsatisfactory to the people of Woodstock. He was a graduate of Yale, a licentiate of Windham County Association, and it was feared that his sympathies might be with Connecticut church government. He did not, however, explicitly refuse to sign the covenant adopted by the church in 1727, but presented a written statement of his own views and principles, which was deemed satisfactory. A town-meeting was called, July 4, 1737, when it was agreed, "that all that were of the mind to concur with the church in the ordination of Mr. Stiles, should move into the men's body of seats, and all that non-concurred into the women's seats." Thirty-nine moved into the former and eight into the latter, and the call was confirmed and accepted. Eliphalet Carpenter, Captain John May and Edward Morris were appointed by the town to join with the church committee, Deacon Johnson and Nathaniel Jacobs, in making provision for the reception and entertainment of the ordaining council, "honorable but not extravagant." Mr. Stiles was ordained, July 27, and seven pounds soon after allowed Mrs. Throop, "for her trouble and charge in entertaining the ministers at lectures and fasts and ordination." Five pounds was also granted Peter Garner, "for the frame the hour-glass stands in." At the same meeting, September 12, "a horse or foot bridge over the river between the ponds," was ordered, and Isaiah Tiffany exempted from paying the rent of the school land, "by reason of Dr. Perrin's burning down the fence so that he could not have any profit from it."

In the winter of 1737, it was ordered that school should be kept eight weeks in the north school, seven at the west, seven at the south and four weeks at Wappaquasset. In the following spring, an attempt was made to settle and confirm these school divisions. Captain May, Deacon Lyon, Jed. Frizzel, James Chaffee and Benjamin Bugbee were appointed a committee, "To set the bounds to the schools in the several parts of the town, so that one part may not send their children to any other part, and every part of the town enjoy their own school without being interrupted by any other." This movement excited some opposition. "Deacon Lyon would not accept, and Lieutenant Wright dissented," but it was nevertheless carried out. The central school on Woodstock Hill was to have the children of Ensign Lyon, Jabez Corbin, Ebenezer Holmes, Jos. Wright, James Marcy, Henry Lyon, Lieutenant Morris, Captain Payson, Thomas Fox and Nathan Ainsworth. The north school included inhabitants north of these, with Joseph Belknap. The west school was according to bounds previously

assigned, taking in Enos Bartholomew. Wappaquasset division to the south of Clay-pit Brook.

Public lands still claimed the attention of proprietors. Isaiah Tiffany succeeded John Chandler as clerk. The tracts left common when Roxbury's half of Woodstock was divided, were laid out in 1738. This division began with the most easterly meadows and extended westward, allowance being made for highways. The Great Cedar Swamp was still left undivided, and some small pieces of land—Captain John May, Eph. Child and Jos. Lyon being empowered to prosecute trespassers, and see that no one be allowed to cut but for his own use. One hundred and fifty acres of public land in the south half of Woodstock, near its western boundary, were also sold in 1738, to John Chandler, Jun., Josiah Mills, John Dwight and John Heywood.

#### XIV.

SETTLEMENT OF WEST WOODSTOCK. PRECINCT SET OFF AND ORGANIZED. MEETING-HOUSE BUILT. CHURCH FORMED.

MR. STEPHEN WILLIAMS ORDAINED. UNEASINESS  
WITH MR. STILES. DEATH OF COL. CHANDLER.

THE western part of the south half of Woodstock was laid out in four ranges, and distributed among the proprietors soon after 1716, but its settlement was deferred for some years. After the termination of the later Indian troubles and the distribution and occupation of the north half of the township, settlement gradually extended to this quarter. Joshua, third son of Colonel John Chandler, took possession of his father's out division—"Lot twenty-third, third range"—in 1727. Thomas and John Child, Benjamin Corbin, Jacob Lyon, Nathaniel Aspinwall, Joseph Morse, Samuel and Jesse Bugbee, Abraham Perrin, John Marey and other sons of original settlers and proprietors, also settled on farms in that vicinity. In 1731, a two-months school was allowed them. In 1732, the western boundary line of the town, which had never been properly defined, was ordered to be continued from the dividing line between north and south sections to the south bounds of the town. A school-house in the west part of the town was also considered. At a town-meeting, May 16, 1733, it was granted, "That the inhabitants dwelling on the west side of a due north and south line from the top of Fort Hill to the dividend lines on the north and south bounds of the town, have liberty to meet together and agree where a school-house may be built." In October following, the inhabitants reported, "That the best place for a school-house is north of Clay-pit Brook, between Joshua Chandler's and John Paine's

lots"—a site now included in the village of West Woodstock. This being secured, other privileges were soon demanded in a petition from the western inhabitants, November 2, 1736, showing:—

"That we are living remote from the public worship of God and exposed to great hardships and difficulties in cold and difficult times of year; have arrived to a considerable number of families—thirty-five in the limits of the west school—in which are many children and others who must either stay at home or be exposed to hardships traveling to and from the public worship, inconsistent with their tender years and condition; have always borne our full proportion, and might reasonably be set off into a precinct, but are unwilling to defeat the town or withdraw our shoulders from the burden but beg for preaching four months at the charge of the whole town.

Joshua Chandler.  
Thomas Child.  
Benjamin Corbin.  
Roger Crary.  
John Goodell.  
Jacob Lyon.  
Nath. Aspinwall.  
Samuel Bugbee.  
Jesse Bugbee.  
Nath. Johnson.

Joel Chaffee.  
John Frizzel.  
Joseph Wright.  
Zebulon Dodge.  
Joseph Griggs.  
Ebenezer Paine.  
Ebenezer Lyon.  
John Broughton.  
John Child.  
Thomas Allen.

Abraham Paine.  
Joseph Morse.  
Nath. Davenport.  
Joseph Chaffee.  
John Marcy.  
Ebenezer Smith.  
John Payson.  
Jonathan Payson.  
Nathan Payson.  
Asa Payson."

The town, then much occupied with sundry difficulties, referred the matter to the next full meeting, and then deferred decision till July, 1737, when it refused to give the west inhabitants "ten pounds to encourage them to hire some candidate to preach to them, but gave them liberty to have preaching in the cold and difficult season at their own cost." A minister was procured for two successive winters, but did not remove the difficulty. The charge of supporting two ministers was almost as burdensome as the long ride to the cold meeting-house, already so filled "as to render it very difficult for many to get seats." Again, in 1739, the western inhabitants begged for preaching in the cold season at the cost of the town. The town acted nothing in regard to the former part of the petition, by reason of a former vote, wherein they had liberty, but positively refused "to afford any help towards the support of preaching." After waiting two years without further relief, the long-suffering western inhabitants thus addressed the town:

"Oct. 2, 1741.

Forasmuch as the western part of the town is now increased to a considerable number of families, and some of them are by the blessing of Almighty God grown numerous, and from the experience we have had in some winters past, cannot but apprehend it will tend to our religious interest, at least, to have the worship of God in a constant way settled amongst us.

We, therefore, make our application to you, our friends and brethren, with whom we have lived at all times in great amity, that our remote and difficult circumstances in attending the worship of God with our families at the present meeting-house, may be taken into your compassionate consideration, and that by some proper vote, to be passed after due time, we may obtain your countenance or consent to make our application by petition to the Gen. Court, at our own charge—that the west part or half of the town may be erected into a separate town. And we hereby request the selectmen to insert the substance hereof in the next warrant that shall be made out for calling a town-meeting, which will greatly oblige your brethren and fellow-servants."

This presumptuous request called out a strong opposition, and after being debated at two town-meetings and an adjournment, was curtly denied. A division of the town was not to be suffered at any cost. Again, the persevering West-side people returned to the charge, declaring, "That the present meeting-house would in no ways accommodate them, being so small and very much on one side the town," and pressed their suit for a separate town. Again, their request was refused, but only by a majority of *two*. Encouraged by this gain, they petitioned in April for liberty to address the Assembly, and received permission by a small majority—some publicly protesting. July 2, 1742, Benjamin Marey and thirty-five others from the west part of Woodstock, represented to the General Court of Massachusetts, "their inconvenience by reason of remoteness from public worship," and asked for a separate town or precinct. The petition was read, considered slightly and dismissed. This refusal failed to discourage them in their efforts, but in August they thus appealed "to the selectmen of Woodstock :"—

"We, the subscribers, desire you would insert a clause in the next warrant for calling a town-meeting, the under-written request :—

That, whereas, we, the inhabitants of the westerly part of the town, having preferred a petition to the Great and General Court of the Province (by the consent of town), praying to be set off a distinct and separate township—and there seems to be a greater probability of being set off a parish or precinct than a town, and to drive things to extremities, we are unwilling. We do earnestly pray that the town would, as far as they can, vote that the west half part of the town, with the inhabitants, may be a distinct parish or precinct, that so we may have the public worship of God settled amongst us, which is the principal thing we aim at. That so we may apply ourselves unto the Great and General Court of Assembly for an act of incorporation. Herein you will oblige your friends and neighbors."

This request was duly presented and dismissed, "by reason some objected against the legality of the meeting because the notification was not set up in the right place in the north half." Undeterred by this rebuff, Nathaniel Johnson and others ventured application :—

"To his Excellency, William Shirley, Esq., Captain-General and Governor-in-Chief, in and over his Majesty's Province of the Massachusetts Bay in New England.

To his Majesty's Council and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, the 18th day of November, 1742.

The memorial of us, the subscribers, Inhabitants of the westerly part of the town of Woodstock, humbly sheweth :—

That your memorialists preferred a petition to the Honorable Court, in May last, relating to our being set off a distinct and separate *township*, which petition was dismissed in Council, June 9, 1742.

Therefore our earnest prayer to your Excellency and Honors, now is, That our petition may be so far received as that an act may pass this Honorable Court to set off and incorporate the said westerly half-part of said town, with the inhabitants thereof, into a distinct and separate *precinct* only, and invest them with all such powers and privileges as other parishes by law do or ought to enjoy; that so your petitioners may be excused from paying our proportion to the settled minister whilst we support preaching amongst ourselves, and



that we may have the worship of God settled amongst ourselves, which is the principal thing we aim at, and your petitioners in duty bound shall ever pray."

On the reading of this petition in the House of Representatives, November 24, it was ordered, "That the petitioners serve the town of Woodstock with a copy, that they show cause, if any they have, on the first Friday of the next sitting of this Court, why the prayer thereof should not be granted. April 5, 1743, Woodstock petition was again read, together with the answers of John Chandler, Esq., and others, and a further memorial from Joseph Chaffee and Samuel Chandler, and thereupon the Court ordered, "That Joseph Dwight, Nahum Wood and Captain Josiah Conant be a committee to repair to Woodstock and report next May." The town, foreboding the result of investigation, sulkily refused all aid to the committee. At a public meeting, May 9, warned expressly "to see if they will make provision for the committee appointed by the General Court," it flatly declined to make any provision, or even to choose a committee to meet them. The committee viewed the situation and reported in favor of petition. The western inhabitants, after this long and arduous struggle, won the day. September 15, 1743, the report of the committee was read and accepted, and the "west half-part of Woodstock erected into a separate and distinct township, and vested with all the rights and privileges that precincts by law should enjoy."

The first precinct meeting in the new parish, was held September 27, 1743, at the school-house. John Marcy was chosen moderator, Isaac Johnson, clerk; Joseph Chaffee, Joseph Marcy and Ebenezer Lyon, committee; Joseph Chaffee, Moses Lyon and Isaac Johnson, assessors; John Marcy, treasurer. At the second meeting, November 7, other matters were considered. It was agreed that notices for meetings should be set up at Ebenezer Paine's and John Coats' shop. The site of the projected meeting-house was next discussed. Twenty-six voters favored "the side of Bungee Hill, a little south of Moses Lyon's house, northeast corner of Joshua Chandler's land," and two opposed it. Ebenezer Smith, John Child and Nathaniel Johnson were appointed a committee, to request the east or first precinct to free them from paying anything towards Mr. Stiles' support, and also to join with them in affixing the bounds between the precincts. The town assented and appointed Captain John May, Jabez Lyon and Daniel Paine for the latter service, with instructions to measure the east bounds of Woodstock, and the line between the north and south halves, and find the contents of the town. This point being settled, a north and south line was run and Woodstock divided into east and west parishes, the west parish retaining for a time the name of the town at its first settlement—New Roxbury.

At a parish-meeting, December 8, John Marcy, John Child and Ebenezer Paine were requested to procure some suitable person to preach the present winter, and sixty pounds assessed for his support. It was also voted, "To build a meeting-house," and a committee appointed, "To see that suitable stuff be provided." Of four candidates designated—Messrs. Throop, Barker, Adams and Strong—one was probably procured to preach through the winter. Services were held in the school-house or some convenient dwelling-house. February 13, 1744, it was voted, "To build the meeting-house forty-eight by thirty-eight, and there were fifteen yeas and ten no's." Three hundred pounds were also voted to carry on the work and it was agreed, "To begin to get out stuff next November, and to raise May after." John Marcy, Isaac Johnson and Thomas Child were appointed to request the proprietors of the north half to give them liberty to get stuff for the meeting-house from the old cedar swamp. March 12th, Moses Lyon was chosen clerk. It was voted, "To petition the Court to lay a tax for building meeting-house on unimproved land—five shillings per acre for five years—Joseph Chaffee to present petition;" also, "To hire preaching for one month, not to give over three pounds." Mr. Hobart Estabrook preached the month, and was then hired for two months more. In September it was voted, "That two more ministers should be hired on probation." Ebenezer Lyon, Isaac Johnson, Joseph Marcy, Joshua Chandler and Samuel Bugbee were appointed to examine a spot for a burying-ground. In response to the petition of Joseph Chaffee, the General Assembly granted a tax of two-pence a year for two years on all the unimproved lands in New Roxbury for building meeting-house and settling minister, the petitioners having first notified non-resident proprietors by inserting the substance of their petition three several times in the Boston Gazette. The inhabitants of New Roxbury accepted the grant and made provision for its collection. The tax of £300, previously voted, had been already assessed and paid over.

The appointed time had now come for beginning "to get out stuff for the meeting-house," but no action was reported. The selected site was unsatisfactory. At a society-meeting, December 10, 1744, it was voted, "To set the meeting-house the southeast corner of Bartholomew's lot, belonging to Samuel Bugbee, north from Bugbee's house, he giving two acres of land to the parish." Ebenezer Lyon, Thomas Child, Benjamin Corbin, Benjamin Marcy, Edward Ainsworth, John Goodell, Roger Crary, Israel Marcy, Samuel Marcy, Ebenezer and Stephen Corbin, Moses Lyon, Edward Morris and John Marshcraft, dissented from this vote. The difference continuing, it was agreed, January 25, 1745, "To choose a committee from abroad to fix upon a decisive spot for meeting-house." Robert Knowlton of Ashford,

Joseph Leavens of Killingly and Esquire Grosvenor of Pomfret were selected for this service, but Mr. Wolbridge of Stafford was substituted for the latter, "because of his child's residence in the vicinity." Isaac Johnson, Joseph Chaffee, Ebenezer Faine, Thomas Child, Jonathan Bugbee and Ebenezer Corbin, were chosen to wait upon the committee, who met on the 18th of March and spent four days in viewing all parts of the precinct and hearing all parties, and decided, "That the most suitable spot to accommodate all was on a dry knoll east of Bungee Hill"—the site of the present Congregational house of worship in West Woodstock. This decision was accepted and harmony restored. "Mr. Joshua Chandler agreed to give the precinct one acre of land to set the meeting-house where the decisive committee fixed it," and the work of building was at length begun.

Meetings for public worship were held during this year at the house of Joshua Chandler. Business meetings were still held in the school-house. All important votes were taken by going to opposite sides of the house. No minister was yet selected. Mr. Nehemiah Barker and a Mr. Newton were the favorite candidates. Advice was sought from the neighboring ministers—Mr. Stiles, Mr. Ebenezer Williams and Mr. Mosely of Canada. November 29, it was voted, "To get old Mr. Dwight to preach, the Sabbath before we come to the choice of a minister." This recognition from the children of his early pastorate must have been peculiarly grateful to the aged and superannuated pastor, but it is doubtful if he was able to accept the invitation. December 6, 1745, it was voted, "Before choosing a minister to keep a day of fasting and prayer to God for his direction and blessing in all our regular attempts to have the gospel settled among us: also, to apply to Mr. Stiles, Mr. Ebenezer Williams of Pomfret, Mr. Solomon Williams of Lebanon, Mr. Wheelock of the Crank and Mr. Mosely, for their advice in this important affair of settling a minister." On December 20th, the fast was kept and advice received from the assembled ministers. It was agreed, "That the choice should be made by polling—those in favor of Mr. Barker to go to the east side of the school-house; in favor of Mr. Newton, to the west." Thirty went to the east side; fourteen, to the west. Even this vote did not prove decisive; Mr. Barker, if called, did not accept, and before long settled on Breakneck, in Killingly, while Mr. Stephen Williams appeared as a candidate in Woodstock. May 7, 1746, it was put to vote, "Whether they should continue to hear Mr. Williams preach," and answered unanimously in the affirmative. June 23, a meeting was held, "To see if they would fix upon July 8, to try and make choice of Stephen Williams for a minister." The whole assembly signified their consent by moving to the east side the school-house. July 2, was observed

as a day of preparatory fasting and prayer, Messrs. Williams and Mosely preaching, Messrs. Stiles and Bass of Ashford assisting in other parts of the service. July 8, the society again met, when thirty-four voted in favor of Mr. Williams, two against him. Four hundred pounds in settlement and two hundred pounds salary, were offered him. After some delay, Mr. Williams accepted the call, providing, "they would give fifty acres of good land with a good title, a quarter of a mile from the meeting-house; set up a frame of proper dimensions, cover it, dig and stone cellar, and get stones together for a chimney, and also sufficient cord wood yearly."

The society consenting, provision was soon made for ordination. The meeting-house was slowly progressing. May 7, 1746, a suitable workman was engaged to frame it, and soon after, Abraham Perrin, Amos Morse and others were appointed to provide for raising, and cover and enclose it as soon as possible. Joseph Chaffee was allowed ten shillings a day for work on meeting-house. In the winter following, timber was got out for body-seats. June 15, Samuel Bugbee was directed "to take care of meeting-house, provide a cloth and pillow to preach on, and lay down the floor before ordination, and *not* to make a breast-work in the gallery. The second Wednesday of June was observed as a day of fasting preparatory to ordination, on which day the church was probably organized. The friendly neighboring ministers, who had so often aided the infant society, assisted on this occasion. The members were probably received mostly from the first church of Woodstock. A committee from the church was now appointed to join with that of the society in making provision for Mr. Williams' "solemn ordination." The two Messrs. Williams, together with the Rev. Messrs. Stiles, Mosely and Cabot, were invited to officiate; the unfinished meeting-house was made ready for temporary occupation, and on June 24, 1747, Mr. Stephen Williams was ordained pastor of the Second Church of Woodstock. No record is preserved of the number or condition of the church at this period. Its first deacons were Ebenezer Corbin and Ebenezer Child. Its pastor was grand-son of Rev. John Williams of Deerfield, and son of Rev. Stephen Williams, D. D. He was graduated from Yale College in 1741; studied theology with his father, and was twenty-five years of age at the time of his settlement. In the following year, he married Martha Hunt of Northampton, and settled in the pleasant homestead provided by his parishioners.

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In the first society, church affairs were less harmonious. Mr. Stiles, though greatly respected for his learning and ability, was in some



respects exceptionable to his people. Notwithstanding the pains they had taken to express their own sentiments respecting church government, and assure themselves of his sympathy, it was soon evident that he inclined to Saybrook form of discipline. Unlike their previous pastors, "who had been members of the Association of neighboring ministers in Massachusetts Bay, and had no right, nor vocation anywhere else," Mr. Stiles asked leave to attend the meetings of the Windham County Association in Connecticut, but before he could obtain liberty was obliged "to declare, in the presence of the church, that he had no meaning to sit among them as a member, nor to have any concern with them other than purely for his own information and satisfaction." Yet, notwithstanding the restriction he was under and "the assurance he had given the people of his innocent intentions," Mr. Stiles appeared before the Association at its meeting in Killingly, August, 1740, and "desired to be admitted a member," but as Woodstock was in Massachusetts, and Association limits confined to the district of the county, he could not be received without any reserve, but "was admitted to such privileges and benefits as were consistent with our civil establishment." This ecclesiastic connection excited much jealousy and apprehension, and Mr. Stiles was suspected of attempting "to set up their method of administration and church government among his people."

Still greater uneasiness was occasioned by the question of salary. The town had agreed to give Mr. Stiles "the same as they gave Mr. Throop," but so unsettled was the currency that it was very difficult to ascertain the present worth of money. In less than six months after his settlement, Mr. Stiles was constrained to ask "the selectmen to call a town-meeting to reconsider their last vote respecting his salary and settlement, and concert and agree upon some measure for a just and honest fulfilment of what the town voted." At this meeting, December 5, 1737, Mr. Stiles sent the following letter :

"To the town of Woodstock, assembled :—

Brethren beloved. I have lately been made sensible that what you have promised is not equal to what you gave Mr. Throop; did not think that I should have so disagreeable task as to say anything about my support; did not wish to be diverted from my beloved studies to enter upon disputes and debates about my support which would much discourage and dishearten me, and entreat you to do by me as you did by Mr. Throop, viz., to choose some suitable person by whom we may know what silver is an ounce, that justice and equity might take place."

Judge Chandler, Captain Payson, John May, Edward Morris and Nath. Sanger were thereupon chosen to wait upon the Rev. Abel Stiles, and try and compromise with him. Mr. Stiles "had good evidence that silver was twenty-seven shillings an ounce, and that would satisfy him," and upon that basis their money affairs were adjusted.

Mr. Stiles was married in 1739, to Alethea Robinson of Lebanon, and as family burdens increased, was again constrained to appeal to the town:—

“Dec. 25, 1741. I take this opportunity to give the town a public information of a personal difficulty, which perhaps you are not sufficiently acquainted with. In a word, the case is this, viz., what the town has been pleased to vote for my support I find to be not sufficient for that purpose. What I now inform you is not a matter of mere opinion or of guess, but a matter of real experience and certain knowledge. I have honestly endeavored to make it answer the end (in some tolerable degree at least), but I find it impossible to be done, and I am almost assured you cannot much wonder at this if you duly consider the following things, viz., my necessary large expense, the great discount made upon all bills, the extraordinary price of all the necessaries and comforts of life. Add to all these, the unreasonable, unhappy manner in which I have received what the town has voted me from time to time. This one thing has contributed greatly to my disadvantage, not only the last year, but also every year since I have been settled. This, the past and present treasurer, the past and present constables, can easily witness to. I do assure you that nothing but great necessity could force me to give you information. I am the more sorry I am obliged to do this at a season in which I well know your burdens are very heavy, as you are part of a Province now groaning under very sore calamities. I am sure I am unwilling to make any needless addition to your present burden if I could avoid it. I had much rather make it less than greater if I were able. I will just observe one plain truth, viz.: Either I must be supported by the town, or some other way, or I must not be supported at all. But I doubt not there is goodness, compassion, honor and religion in Woodstock enough to incline you to consider what I have offered, and in a proper time to act upon it that which will be suitable in itself and abundantly satisfactory to me, who begs your prayers that he may be more and more able and willing to spend and be spent for your souls' good.

ABEL STILES.”

After long debate upon this communication, some seeming not to understand its meaning, the town voted to refer it to May meeting for consideration, and appointed a committee to desire Mr. Stiles to explain his meaning, and whether he desired some addition to his salary, or what he would have. Mr. Stiles explained, May 17, 1742, “That he did not send a petition but remonstrance and information; had not a gospel support from his salary, presents and land; would not say what he *did* want, but what he *would not* have: 1. Unchristian warm debates. 2. Anything that would cause uneasiness.” The town thought the law now standing the standard of the value of silver, and that they ought to govern themselves by it in paying Mr. Stiles' salary, but voted “forty pounds to make him easier,” and asked, “if he were satisfied.” Mr. Stiles replied, “That so far from being satisfied he was exceedingly dissatisfied.” The town wished the matter might be “righted and the uneasiness removed,” but was at a loss to know how to do it. Much unpleasant feeling was manifested; gentlemen were sure that they could be heard elsewhere and the difficulty arranged. At a town-meeting, called September 5, to consider the matter, Mr. Stiles sent a message, begging them to act nothing till he had come into the meeting, and then desired that there might not be any warm debate, declared that he had no demands on the town and

freely gave up all. The town ordered the salary made out "at 26s. 8d. per ounce," and made no farther grant or addition.

The insufficient accommodations of the meeting-house was another source of annoyance, thus portrayed in petition:—

"*January 1, 1740.* We, the inhabitants of Woodstock, being sensible—yea! by experience sufficiently so—that our meeting-house is usually, especially when the whole town is assembled, so filled as renders it very difficult for many persons to get room, and would be more so were there not care taken by inviting many into pews, ask for liberty to build a pew over the men's stairs, large enough to hold eight or ten men, provided it be done without harm or injury to the meeting-house—charge borne by ourselves. If it is objected that this will disfigure the house, except by building over the women's stairs, then we pray this may be acted upon. We are your servants, not freeholders. Daniel Child, John May, Nehemiah Lyon, Timothy Hill, and others."

The matter was referred to the committee of selectmen. After the formation of the New Roxbury society, this grievance was greatly abated, and sufficient room left in the meeting-house for the accommodation of the remaining inhabitants. The east part of the town now constituted its first society, and the secular affairs of the church were transferred to its management. Each society, also, assumed the charge of its schools. A fifth school had before this been allowed in the south of the town. The school-house granted the north inhabitants in 1735 was not erected for more than ten years—"the committee not succeeding in selecting a place that was liked." The "inhabitants at last agreed upon the spot, where the highways intersect east of Captain Child's house" (probably "Village Corners"), and their choice was confirmed by the town, March, 1743. In 1746, Joseph Wright, Colonel Thomas Chandler, Edward Morris and Henry Bowen were appointed a committee to dispose of sundry pieces of land given to the inhabitants of the south half for public uses, for the benefit of their schools. Particular instructions were given them "to leave eight rods north of the burying-ground for an addition there if need be, and, also, all the common west of a strait north line with the front of the burial-place up to the brow of the hill, for the training-field." With the avails of this land they were able to build a new school-house on Woodstock Hill, twenty-four feet by twenty, with a stone chimney well covered on the outside and filled with bricks, and ceiled with boards, and smaller houses at South Woodstock and Wappaquasset corner. A committee was also appointed to take especial care "that no person trespass on the ten acres left for hearth-stones."

Though Woodstock was not lacking in public spirit and enterprise, she did not succeed in maintaining the grammar school, required by law in towns of her population, and was more than once presented before the Grand Jurors of Worcester County, for want of one. In 1743, she was also presented "for not keeping

her pound in repair," and ordered to build a new one. Many of her residents were indicted before that body for "shooting buck," "being disguised with strong drink," and other flagrant offences, and punished by fines and whippings, but of one common in many towns—traveling on the Lord's day and absence from public worship—none were found guilty. In the notorious Land-Bank Scheme which agitated Massachusetts for many years, Woodstock was seriously implicated. Several of her citizens joined the company formed in Boston in 1739, for issuing bills of credit on land security, to be redeemed in twenty years, not in gold or silver but in manufactures of the Province. In the disturbed condition of financial affairs, the demoralization of the currency and the general prostration of business, this project was eagerly welcomed by many. The ranks of the company were quickly filled, and a large number of notes issued like the subjoined specimen:—

" TWENTY SHILLINGS.

"We promise, for ourselves and Partners, to receive this Twenty Shilling Bill of Credit as so much Lawful Money in all payments, Trade and Business, and after ye expiration of twenty years to pay ye possessor ye value thereof in Manufactures of the Province. BOSTON."

The Government of Massachusetts at once denounced this scheme as unsafe and pernicious, and refused to incorporate the company. A proclamation was promptly issued by Governor Belcher, warning people not to receive or pass the notes, "because their circulation would tend to defraud men of their estates and disturb the peace and order of the people." This warning not apparently diminishing the circulation of the bills or the number of stock-holders, a second proclamation was issued, November, 1740, in which all officers of the militia were cautioned against giving currency in any way to this paper, under penalty of dismissal from office. A circular was addressed to the Courts of General Sessions of the Peace, desiring them to caution all such as were taverners, victuallers, retailers, &c., against passing or receiving these bills. By a vote of the Council, no attorney or councillor was to be permitted before them in that capacity, who should pass, receive or give encouragement to the circulation of Land-Bank money. These coercive measures excited strong opposition. A powerful party favored the Land-Bank and refused to submit to these restrictions. Many judicial and military officers were removed; many resigned their offices and commissions. "Whole troops, nay, whole regiments resigned, or threatened to, rather than not encourage these manufactory bills." A kindred spirit animated many towns, which resolved that they would pay their rates in this money. Among those believing "that the interest of their native country required the utmost of their endeavour to promote this scheme," were many citizens



of Woodstock. At a town-meeting, May, 1741, it was voted, "That all town charges should be paid or defrayed by notes or bills of credit commonly called Land-Bank or Manufactory bills, and no person should be chosen to serve the town that would not accept them." The officers of the three military companies in Woodstock, forbidden by Government to aid in the circulation of these bills, thereupon resigned their commissions in a voluntary letter to Colonel Chandler. The participation of his son Samuel—captain of the first company—in this affair, was thus noticed in a Boston paper:—

"N. B. Captain Chandler is one of the sons of Hon. Colonel Chandler of Woodstock, that steady defender of the liberties of his country, which yields great comfort to that old patriot, who (like Mattathias, the last of the Maccabees), has transmitted with his blood, his spirit and love to the true interest of his people, to one and perhaps all his sons."

An Act of Parliament, extending to America, Act 6 of George I., by which all raising of transferable stock without authority of a statute or charter was made unlawful—and confirmed by the Government of Massachusetts, April 7, 1742, was the death-blow of the Land-Bank scheme, but its pernicious effects were felt for many years.

The military spirit so early manifested in Woodstock was stimulated and strengthened by the influence of Colonel Chandler and his sons, and her quota was ever ready on all emergencies. When war with France and Spain was proclaimed in Boston, June 2, 1744, fifty men from Colonel Chandler's regiment were at once impressed to guard the frontier. This regiment, with Thomas Chandler for lieutenant-colonel, John Payson and Samuel Chandler for lieutenants and Nathan Payson for ensign, served with distinction throughout the war, and assisted in the siege and capture of Louisburg in 1745. The names of three Woodstock youth—Peter Perrin, Aaron Lyon and Joseph Marcy, Jun.—are inscribed on her town records, as "slain by an Indian enemy, Saturday, May 24, 1746, at town No. 4, New Hampshire."

Though the proclivities of Woodstock were so decidedly military and she did not succeed in maintaining a grammar school, she was far from indifferent to educational interests and literary culture. Many of her citizens united in that early English Library Association, whose formation has been previously detailed. Mr. Stiles, despite his "insufficient salary" and pecuniary embarrassments, was its largest subscriber. The second meeting of the Company was held with Colonel Chandler, and several other Woodstock gentlemen signed the "triplicate covenant," and shared the privileges of the Library. The enthusiasm of Mr. Stiles for his "beloved studies" was communicated to some of his townsmen, so that several young men of Woodstock families were fitted for college under his supervision. Nathaniel Draper and Thomas

Bradbury Chandler—son of William and grandson of Colonel Chandler—entered Yale College in 1741; Joshua Chandler, Jun., in 1743; Stephen Holmes in 1748; Jeremiah Child in 1753.

Colonel John Chandler, the last survivor of the original proprietors and settlers of Woodstock, and long its most prominent and distinguished citizen, died at his family homestead in South Woodstock, in 1743. His decease was thus chronicled in the Boston Gazette :—

“WOODSTOCK, *August 12, 1743.* After nine days illness, the tenth instant, died, Hon. John Chandler of this town, in the 79th year of his age, and this day his remains were decently interred and accompanied to the grave by a vast concourse of people from this and neighboring towns. He was one of the first settlers, to whose wisdom and prudence the order and regularity of Woodstock was largely owing. He was in the Commission of Peace, forty years; one of the Council, seven years—which offices he served with much honor and acceptance. He was a gentleman greatly delighted with conversation; of a most generous and hospitable disposition, his doors being open to all, especially the faithful ministers of Christ of all denominations, whom he treated with great courtesy and respect. He loved to promote everything that was decent and orderly, and was strongly attached to Government both in church and state. He died with express resignation to the will of God, hoping in the divine mercy for eternal life through Jesus Christ.”

Colonel Chandler was buried in the old burial-ground on Woodstock Hill, but by his especial request no tombstone was erected to his memory. He left several sons, already in active life. John had settled in Worcester, and now succeeded his father as judge, colonel and counsellor. Joshua was one of the first settlers of West Woodstock. William's residence was just east of the town line on Chandler Hill in Thompson Parish, but he was actively concerned in Woodstock affairs. Samuel occupied the family homestead in South Woodstock, bequeathed him by his father, “in consideration of his great prudence, industry and dutiful behavior and application in my business ever since he was twenty-one.” Thomas, the youngest son, was much occupied with public affairs, serving with distinction in several military campaigns, and entrusted with many important commissions both in Massachusetts and Connecticut.

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## XV.

TOWN AND CHURCH AFFAIRS IN ASHFORD. DEATH OF  
MR. HALE. SETTLEMENT OF MR. BASS.  
WINDHAM COUNTY ASSOCIATION.

**T**HOUGH Ashford suffered so severely from famine, drought and internal dissensions, she still persisted in her efforts to complete the minister's house and meeting-house. Farther exemption from tax-

paying was granted by the Assembly, and other relief afforded—the old South Church of Boston voting, “That fifteen pounds be given to Mr. James Hale of Ashford for his encouragement in the work of the ministry.” February 2, 1727, after six years’ probation, “our beloved brothers, Isaac Kendall and Josiah Bugbee were ordained in the deacon’s office with prayer and fasting and the laying on of hands.” The services were conducted with great formality and solemnity—the congregation being present as well as the church. Three senior brethren of the church—William Chapman, William Ward and William Snow—assisted in the laying on of hands, after which ceremony, “an agreeable sermon was preached by the pastor.” At the same time, Deacon Bugbee’s wife was received into the church by letter from Roxbury, “she penitentially renewing the covenant and covenanting with us and coming as with a spirit desirous of forgiveness from God and man.” Joseph Works, Joseph Whiton and wife, Joseph Abbe from Windham, and Sarah, wife of Edward Sumner, were also admitted to the church; Seth Lyon and Edward Sumner owned the covenant. During this year, an attempt was made to appoint a ruling elder, but after much agitation and discussion about the matter it was laid aside, as “not clear to the present light of the brethren.” Mr. Hale reports, “That the great earthquake on the Lord’s day evening, October 29, 1727, was in an awakening manner felt in this town, as also the terrible storm of wind and hail the September before.”

The Ashford church was exceedingly strict in matters of discipline, and desirous to deal faithfully with all its offending members. The number of *quarrels* that had afflicted the community, made this duty very delicate and difficult. Mr. Hale was exceedingly careful and conscientious, fearful of doing any injustice, or injuring the feelings of any one, more anxious to lead the brethren than to exercise his own authority, and was often forced to apply to the Association for aid and advice in such cases. After the suffrage quarrel, charges brought by Arthur Humphrey against Philip Eastman and Thomas Tiffany, were laid before the Association, which decided, “That the case need not be taken into consideration by the church since Humphrey had not brought sufficient evidence to support his charge, while there was *positive* evidence against himself.” A year later, 1728, Mr. Hale again represented to his brethren in the ministry, “That a brother of the Ashford church has withdrawn himself from the communion, which the church has judged groundless and disorderly, and voted to censure him, but have neglected to execute the same, lest it should have a threatening effect upon the peace of the church. The Rev. Messrs. Meachem, Gager and Clap were accordingly deputed “to assist and strengthen Mr. Hale in this affair,” but were not, apparently, successful,

as the following year Messrs. Fisk, Eleazer and Ebenezer Williams were sent with Mr. Clap, "to assist Mr. Hale in healing and accommodating difficulties"—especially with reference to a prominent member of the Ashford church, who having removed to Mansfield and fallen into scandal, was in great need of discipline. At a meeting of the Association in Ashford a few years later, a difficulty between two of the church members was laid before it, and after receiving their advice, "Mr. Hale did lead the brethren to the vote with counsel and advice of leading brethren in presence of the Rev. Elders," but not himself voting. The following Sabbath, the decision of the Association and confessions from the offending brethren were read in the congregation, and the difficulty settled. Yet, with all their strictness, when it was put to vote, "Whether Ephraim Bemis was guilty of a confessable fault in selling strong liquor in small quantities upon a certain occasion, the church decided in the negative."

The town authorities seconded the church in their efforts to enforce wholesome discipline, erecting stocks before the meeting-house door on the green and prosecuting such individuals as neglected their families and threatened to bring charges upon the town. In 1727, "one mile in breadth to run cross on the west side of Ashford," was annexed to the town of Wellington, "so far as it relateth to parish charges," and two years later was fully annexed and confirmed to that town, and transferred into the county of Hartford. Various improvements were accomplished in time. John Andrews, the school-master, received eighteen shillings for making three books of record. Great pains were taken to accommodate the town with suitable bridges. In 1728, voted, "That the town will butt the west end of the lower or south bridge over Bigelow River from the land part to the stream with solid work with stones, or logs, or both, and if the bridge over the stream be judged defective, then to build it all anew." All the inhabitants of the town were warned to assist in repairing this bridge. A cart-bridge over Bigelow River was also ordered "by Humphrey's sawmill;" also a bridge over Mount Hope River on the Hartford Road; another, "over the great brook by Daniel Bugbee's meadow," and also, a horse-bridge over Mount Hope River in Corbin's land. Benjamin Russel and others were allowed to build a pound on the meeting-house green, at their own cost and charge. As foreign cattle continued to trespass upon Ashford Commons, committees were appointed to drive them out, and in 1734, it was voted, "That any inhabitant of Ashford that shall take into possession, care, or oversight, any neat cattle that don't belong to an inhabitant of Ashford, other than his own proper estate, from the first of April to August, shall forfeit ten shillings to the town for each and every head of neat kine so taken." Jacob Parker received



liberty "to build a stable and set it on the meeting-house green, near the brow of the hill west of the meeting-house." James Beekman, Joseph Whiton and Robert Knowlton were appointed a committee, "to lay out a quarter-acre of land for a burying-place at ye west end of ye town, where people have been buried." A burial-place was also ordered in the east of the town. In 1732, Ashford was sufficiently established to assume the payment of Colony charges, presenting a rate-list of £4,609 9s. Captain John Perry and Philip Eastman were now chosen to represent her in the General Assembly, and were continued for some years. The latter was also appointed a justice of the Peace.

In 1734, the one school-master for the town was replaced by three "school-dames" for the three sections—"one school to be east side of Bigelow River; one to sute the middle of the town; one west side of Mount Hope River." *Nine* men were selected to hire the three dames, Captain Perry, Sergeant Wadkins and Joseph Work, east end; John Smith, Thomas Corbin and Timothy Dimmock for the middle; Deacon Bugbee, Elias Keyes and Benjamin Walker for west end—who secured the services of Mrs. Chapman, Ann Eaton and Sarah Bugbee, for four pounds each, for three months. In the following year, Samuel Snow, Edward Tiffany and Thomas Corbin were allowed to build a school-house at their own cost and charge, on the meeting-house green, south of Hartford, and west of Mansfield road. A school-master was hired to teach three months at each end of the town. In 1737, he was hired for nine months; in 1739, for a year, finding house-room wherever practicable. Arrangements were now in progress for procuring suitable school-houses. A letter had been written to Mr. Stoddard, "to see if he would allow anything honorable for maintaining a school," and a gift of one hundred acres of land for the use of a school or the ministry promised, provided the town voted an acknowledgment of his right and title to all the land he claimed in Ashford. The town, after stipulating "That Mr. Stoddard should give a good quit claim in writing for the school-land, and settle fifteen or twenty farms within two years," agreed not to molest him, and acknowledged his legal title to 8864 acres of land in Ashford. January 1, 1739, the town voted, "That the two hundred acres of land received from Mr. Stoddard shall be sold, and the money sequestered to lie upon interest for the use of a religious school in the town of Ashford, forever; land not to be sold for less than four hundred pounds; selectmen to return humble thanks to Mr. Stoddard for his bounty." It was afterwards voted, "To divide the town into three parts about schooling, each of the three parts to have their own money raised." The parts or districts thus set off were afterwards known as the societies of East-

ford, Ashford and Westford. A rate of £150 was soon after ordered, to build a school-house in each division, after which, all school affairs were managed by the respective sections. Elijah Whiton and John Griggs are the first school-masters reported under the new arrangement—the former receiving thirteen pounds for two months' schooling, and boarding himself.

In 1735, Ashford paid her last wolf-bounty—twenty shillings to Joseph Russel for a wolf killed some time before. A large supply of ammunition was procured the following year, viz.: sixty pounds of powder, two hundred-weight of bullets and three hundred gun-flints. Captain Perry's account concerning the banners belonging to the company and also the balance concerning fines and banners were accepted. Philip Eastman was now lieutenant and Zechariah Bicknell ensign, of the Ashford train-band. A committee chosen to examine into the land laid out to Mr. James Corbin and partners, reported in 1740, "That they have already taken up more land than was allowed them by the Court's committee, and still continue to lay out land sequestered for the town's commons." The town, thereupon, forbade all persons to lay out or receive any of the town's commons on account of said twenty-five hundred acres, but it is doubtful if Mr. Corbin's encroachments were arrested by this interdiction.

In 1739, the meeting-house seats were repaired. All the seats in the front gallery were appropriated "for men to sit in; pews allowed over the stairs; hind seat in women's gallery made into a pew." The committee were directed to make some other seats for children as they should think proper, and repair all breaches so as to make the house strong and comfortable. A hundred pounds a year were now allowed Mr. Hale. In 1734, the two deacons were empowered "to supply the pulpit with a good orthodox minister till the Rev. Mr. Hale is able to preach;" in 1742, a committee was chosen to supply the place made vacant by his decease. Church and town were greatly afflicted by his loss, and long cherished his memory—the former voting in later and less prosperous times, to return to the same rules of order and discipline that governed them in Mr. Hale's day. Two hundred and fifty-eight persons were admitted to the communion of the church during his ministry. His tombstone thus commemorates him:—

"Here lies the remains of Rev. Mr. James Hale, the first Pastor of the Church in Ashford, and husband of Mad. Sarah Hale. He left earth for heaven (as we trust) in ye 58th year of his age. November 22, 1742. Here lies a friend of Christ and of his people's, the Rev. J. H.

Let all that loved the man these lines present,  
Follow his faith in Christ and of all their sins repent."

The appointed committee—Robert Knowlton, Joseph Whiton and John Smith—were directed, first, "to pray the Reverend Elders of the

County Association to preach each Sabbath upon the Widow Hale's account, and then to take advice and agree with a man that is likely to be our minister." The first and only candidate, apparently, was Mr. John Bass of Braintree, a Harvard graduate twenty-five years of age. Doctrinal points were then exciting much interest and discussion. In April, 1743, a committee of five was appointed by the church, "to treat with Mr. John Bass about his principles and discipline." These were so far satisfactory that forty-four of the brethren voted to call him to become their pastor; twenty-one "wished a longer time to hear and be acquainted with him." The town, by a vote of eighty-three, united in the call given by the majority of the church, offering £200 salary, and £400—old tenor bills—in settlement. This offer was annulled, and salary stated as silver at 26s. 8d. per ounce. Mr. Bass accepted the call, and a day was appointed for ordination. A minority of the church, however, distrusted the orthodoxy of the candidate and applied to the County Association for liberty to have a hearing in these matters of uneasiness before the Consociation, but were advised to refer them to the ordaining council. On the appointed day—September 7, 1743—"a vast concourse of people" assembled. The day being warm and the meeting-house small, the services were held on the green. The orthodoxy of Mr. Bass was established in the judgment of the council, by an examination of his sermons, though, as he afterwards said, some present "would have rejoiced in his overthrow." A sermon was preached by the Rev. John Hancock of Braintree "on the danger of an unqualified ministry." Mr. Stiles of Woodstock offered the ordaining prayer. Mr. Williams of Pomfret gave the charge; Mr. Cabot of Thompson the right hand of fellowship—and thus Ashford received its second minister.

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The Windham County Association, during these years, was a very influential body, wielding with much energy and ability the ample ecclesiastic powers with which it was invested by the Colonial Government.

Its stated meetings were usually attended by all the ministers within the county limits, and many doubtful questions of doctrine and practice, of more or less importance, were settled by this tribunal. In 1729, it was called upon to decide—

"Whether a person refusing to sit in the place where he has been regularly seated in the house of God, and publicly jostling and interrupting others from sitting in the place where they be seated, be a censurable fault?"

"Answer. That barely refusing to sit in the place appointed, although ordinarily a *fault*, is not a *censurable* one, but for one to publicly contend or

jostle with others for a seat, is a fault that ought to be prudently testified against—and if after suitable efforts he continues obstinate, he is censurable.”

Again they are asked—

“What method shall be taken with a person that has joined one of our churches in full communion, and turns Ana-baptist and is dipped, and refuses to come to communion in one of our churches, declaring them not true churches?”

“Answer. Take pains to recover such from error, but if all prove ineffectual, the minister is publicly to bear testimony against his errors and declare the church discharged from any particular relation to, or care of said person.”

“Query. Whether a person scrupling infant baptism and apprehending the mode of dipping to be more agreeable to Scripture, be alone sufficient bar to communion in our churches?”

“Answer. No.”

“Query. Should confessions of public scandal be made before the whole congregation, or members in full communion only?”

“Answer. Before the whole congregation.”

“Query. If a number of Ana-baptists desire the settled pastor of the church where they live to give liberty to a minister of their own persuasion to preach to them, what shall be done?”

“Answer. It is prudence on such an application to allow such persons to have a minister of their own persuasion if he is satisfied such minister is orthodox except in the article of baptism, and of competent knowledge and regularly introduced according to the Baptist custom, so long as such Baptist preaches the great and important doctrines of religion and does not spend his time and discourses in making a party and turning people's minds from the belief in infant baptism and the mode used ordinarily among us—but if this appears to be his design, think it is not for the interest of religion nor the prudence of a minister, to consent to it.”

With regard to its own ministry the Association was strict and exacting, requiring every candidate—“some time between his giving his answer to settle in any place and the fast before ordination”—to appear before it and give satisfaction as to his abilities and qualifications for the ministerial work, and allowing no minister to occupy any pulpit within its limits, or unite with its membership, without ample evidence of his ministerial character and standing. These precautions and watchfulness were not unnecessary. Its first licentiate, Seth Paine, was soon rebuked for improper expressions and suspended from preaching. Charges were next alleged against a minister of the Association, “of drinking to excess and indecent jesting,” and after repeated trials and warnings, he, too, was suspended from office “for drunkenness and breaking the Sabbath by vain and obscene discourse.” Sentences of deposition upon the Reverends John Fisk and Samuel Wadsworth, for causes previously detailed, were also passed by the Association. Judgment in the case of a once-honored deacon of one of the churches, “suspended from the enjoyment of special ordinances on a conviction of excessive drinking,” was referred to the decision of a “council of Consociation.” These councils of ministers and messengers from the several churches were held whenever occasion called them, but no continuous record of their meetings and proceedings was preserved.



It is impossible to form even an approximate estimate of the growth of Windham County during its first twenty years. Its population increased steadily, and its resources were proportionably developed. New land was cleared and farms brought under better cultivation. In the social condition of the inhabitants there was probably a gradual improvement but no marked change, except perhaps in Windham Green and other favored localities. One township only was added during this period—the territory north of Ashford and west of Woodstock, incorporated in 1734, as the town of Union. Nineteen families had settled in this territory, mostly emigrants from other towns in Windham County. Other settlers soon followed them, and in 1738 a church was organized, not apparently connected with the Windham County Association. Religious societies were set off and incorporated during these twenty years in the east part of Windham, west part of Woodstock, south part of Pomfret, and north and south sections of Killingly, and churches formed in each society. The changes and divisions wrought in the churches of Windham County by the Separate Movement, developed in the latter part of this period, will be fully detailed in succeeding pages.

## BOOK III.

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### THE SEPARATE MOVEMENT. 1740-60.

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#### I.

GENERAL CONDITION OF THE CHURCHES. GREAT REVIVAL.  
GREAT EXCESSES.

THE early religious developments within Windham County were in no respect unusual or remarkable. The several towns "had settled the worship of God" according to the form and order prescribed by the Government of Connecticut. The parish system had been rigorously carried out. Every town comprised one or more religious societies; every citizen of a town was a member of this society, assessed by law for the support of religious as well as civil institutions. Sober dissenters could be released from this tax by a certificate of membership from some accessible religious society of their own order, but only a few Baptists and one or two Quakers had availed themselves of this privilege. The great mass of the population of Windham County supported "the standing order" with apparent heartiness and cordiality. Quarrels touching parish bounds and meeting-house locations had often arisen, but in matters of doctrine and discipline there was apparently great unanimity. The Saybrook Platform, though distasteful to some of the churches, was not formally repudiated by them. The ministers were joined together in friendly and formal Association. The Con-sociated churches also walked together in peace and concord, growing in numbers with the growth of their respective towns, and enjoying for many years much outward prosperity.

Whether the inward religious life kept pace with this fair outward seeming it is impossible to determine. According to the universal testimony of historians, the early part of the eighteenth century was marked by great spiritual declension throughout the New England colonies. The religious zeal and devotion of the early Puritans had

given place to coldness, deadness and formalism. In giving up their independent self-government, the churches had lost much of their primitive life and fervor. Uniformity had been gained at the expense of spirituality. Religious institutions were more prized than religion. Unconverted men had been allowed to share in the privileges of believers. The outward form of worship was maintained by penal enactments, and true, inward spiritual devotion less practiced and regarded.

That the Windham churches with all their apparent prosperity, shared in the prevailing declension of the time, is quite probable. They allowed the half-way covenant; they submitted to religious restrictions; they quarreled shamelessly on matters of little import. Their very unity and harmony in religious belief and doctrine may have proceeded from a lack of vitality. Receiving without questioning "the traditions of the fathers," they may not have cared enough about these points to quarrel over them. But whatever the true state of religion in the days just reviewed by us, there is abundant evidence of a low state of morality. Within a few years, three Windham County ministers were deposed from the ministerial office on charge of scandalous offences; a young licentiate was forbidden to preach because of improper conduct and contumacy; a deacon was suspended from communion with the church "on conviction of excessive drinking;" a woman suffered the extreme penalty of the law for child-murder; one prominent physician was convicted of complicity in a kindred crime, and another walked the streets with a brand upon his forehead and a halter around his neck. Scarce a communion season was observed in any of these churches without the appearing of one, and often several, church members, to make public confession of some breach of morality. Scandalous charges against brethren of these churches were brought before every meeting of Association, and women were sentenced to fines, imprisonments and whipping at every session of the Court for gross and open immorality. That very close scrutiny was maintained, and very great severity exercised in those days is admitted, but it is equally true that there was great need of scrutiny and severity.

The great religious declension was followed by a greater uprising. The religious movement initiated by the preaching of Edwards and Whitefield, swept through the land, awakening multitudes to new spiritual life. As Windham had shared in the declension, she now participated in the revival. Whether the work was first begun through the preaching of neighboring revivalists—Wheelock of Lebanon, Pomeroy of Hebron and Parsons of Lyme—or whether it broke out spontaneously and almost simultaneously in the several towns, cannot now be determined. At a very early period in the awakening, a deep religious interest pervaded these churches and communities.

Professing Christians were aroused and quickened, and great numbers without the church hopefully converted. This religious concern "did in many parishes run swiftly through most of the families, and there was scarce a sermon preached but was blessed for some time to promote this work." In 1741, and several subsequent years, every church in the County received large accessions to its membership. The ministers were at first greatly cheered and encouraged by this new interest in religion, and labored earnestly to promote it, till alarmed by certain extraordinary developments. Itinerant preachers ran from town to town, exciting their hearers into a state of frenzied enthusiasm. The spirit that seized many communities seemed more like intoxication than inspiration. Religious meetings, hitherto conducted with such sobriety and decorum, were now diversified with groans, shrieks, shouts and other violent demonstrations. Faintings and convulsions during these services were common. Some lay prostrate for hours as if struck with death and others declared themselves torn and possessed with devils. "So terrible and affecting were the outcries at some of these meetings that the noise thereof was heard for more than a mile, seeming more like the infernal regions than the place of worshipping the God of Heaven." The rulers in Church and State were horror-struck by these fanatical out-breaks and attempted to suppress them by legal enactments. The Toleration Act was repealed and made void, and liberty of speech restricted to the settled pastors of parishes. These severe measures only arrayed the friends and subjects of the Revival against the Church establishment and Government of Connecticut, and increased the tumults and disorders. Parties were formed in every community, waging deadly war against each other. The anti-Revivalists declared that a work accompanied by such excesses and unseemly manifestations must be of the devil; the Revivalists or New Lights, as they were called, denounced the Established Church as Anti-Christ and Babylon. Churches, neighborhoods and families were divided. In Windham County, the contest for various causes was unusually bitter and protracted. Its early peace and harmony were succeeded by strife, confusion and anarchy. Its churches, previously so harmonious, were split in factions or wholly rent asunder, and its inhabitants, so long one in speech and sentiment, were scattered and divided like those at the Tower of Babel. The progress and result of this great movement can be best seen by following the particular churches through this crisis.



## II.

## WHEELOCK'S TOUR. REVIVAL IN CANTERBURY. LEGISLATIVE ACT. DISTURBANCES. IMPRISONMENT OF ELISHA PAINE.

THE first distinct glimpse of the revival within Windham County limits is given by the Rev. Eleazer Wheelock of Lebanon—one of its most zealous and successful promoters—in his account of a tour through this section to Providence and Boston. He reached Plainfield, October 20, 1741, arose before day next morning, and with the Rev. Mr. Coit and other friends rode on to Voluntown, where Mr. Dorrance courteously received and entertained them. A great work was already in progress in this town and many had been hopefully converted. Young Mr. Gideon Mills was then preaching. A public religious service was held at ten A. M. Mr. Mills preached well; Mr. Wheelock followed him. Mr. Wheelock reports “a great work in this town, but more of the footsteps of Satan than in any place I have yet been in; the zeal of some too furious; they tell of many visions, revelations and many strong impressions upon the imagination. . . Satan is using many artful wiles to put a stop to the work of God in this place.” At a conference meeting at night, Mr. Wheelock warned his hearers against these devices of Satan and heard the accounts of a number of new converts.

October 22, meetings were held throughout the day on the Providence road, “by Mr. John Smith’s barn.” Mr. Wheelock “preached twice with enlargement” to very great assemblies. “Many cried out; many stood trembling; the whole assembly very solemn and much affection; four or five converted.” Next morning, at seven, he left Voluntown, “accompanied by a great number of wounded and comforted.” These impressible Voluntown people were loth to part with the faithful messenger, and a great company of them followed on to Scituate and Providence, joining in the hymns and prayers and listening to the fervid exhortations. The isolated position of this people, their religious restrictions and suspicion of latent “Presbyterianism” in their own minister, made them peculiarly open to exciting influences, and those Satanic devices so deplored by Mr. Wheelock, but even there many lives had been reformed and a large number added to the church.

The church in Canterbury, reduced by its long meeting-house controversy and the defection of its minister to a very low spiritual state, was one of the first awakened by the Revival. No stated minister had been procured, and Mr. Buel—a noted Revivalist—is said to have

labored there with other "supplies" and candidates. Foremost among those revived and strengthened by the new religious interest were Elisha and Solomon Paine, converted twenty years before in the revival at Windham. They were now in middle life, active and influential in church and town. Elisha was a man of unusual breadth and force of character, a successful practitioner in law, and universally conceded "to have the best sense of any one in those parts." Of a speculative and inquiring mind and remarkably liberal and catholic spirit, he early "had the curiosity to hear all the different worships in New England and inquired into their principles and observed their behavior both in and out of their worship," but had seen so little of the power of godliness in any of them that he had feared "that the true religion was not in the land," but now that deeper convictions seized him, he saw that "let who would be of the true religion, his was of no value." The great religious impulse simultaneously moving so many hearts appeared to him a genuine manifestation of the Spirit of God, and after a sharp spiritual conflict he yielded himself to its influence, and with deeper experience and stronger faith, consecrated himself anew to the Christian life and service. His brother Solomon, his inferior in ability and sound judgment, was equally earnest in piety. Many leading members of the Canterbury church were aroused to new interest. Obadiah Johnson, father and son, with their families, Deacon Timothy Backus, Josiah Cleveland and many others, were active in promoting the work. Many of the children and youth of these families were converted and brought into the church. A note from the school-master—Mr. Bartlett—to Solomon Paine upon one occasion, begs him to come to the school-house "before the sun an hour high, for it seems that the Spirit of God is in some small degree at work with some of the children. Lydia Johnson seems to be under conviction, so that some parts of the day she cannot follow her writing; others seem to be moved upon, which appears by their weeping. I desire you to come as soon as you can . . . your heart lifting up to God for a shaking among the dry bones."

Among these youthful converts were the children of Josiah Cleveland. Mrs. Cleveland was sister of the Paines, and, like them, deeply interested in the Revival. Her son John united with the Canterbury church in 1740, and entered Yale College in 1741. During the following winter, he hears "heavenly news from Canterbury." A work of grace had gone through his father's family; his brother Ebenezer and sisters are converted; his father's house has become a little Bethel. A journal kept by the young collegiate in the spring vacation of 1742, gives a glimpse of the condition of affairs at this date. At first young Cleveland, who reports himself in a cold and

backward state, is "something distressed to see the great joy of his mother, brothers and sisters." He never saw such a meeting; fears he is losing his convictions. Mr. Mills was then supplying the pulpit: meetings were held every afternoon and evening in different parts of the town. The school-master—Sir Lewis—and other college graduates were active in labors and exhortations. In the absence of a stated minister, the brethren of the church had assumed more liberty than was usual at that period, and were accustomed to pray and exhort at these meetings.

"April 5. John Cleveland attends a meeting at Captain Brown's. Full attendance. 6. Rides with his father to his brother Josiah's, in Mr. Avery's society. A meeting in the eve, many filled. 7. Fast-day. Mr. Avery preached. 8. Brother Josiah relates his experience. 9. A meeting at Grand-mother Paine's. Christians useful. 12. Went down into town. This night, Mills preached; had some inquirers. We had some of us a very live meeting. Tarried at Uncle Solomon Paine's. 13. Talked with Uncle Solomon about religion. He related his experience. This afternoon Mills preached. His words seemed to have a very great effect upon the audience. I was distrest, but others more so. There was a great stir indeed. 14. This morning, Mr. Baker preached at Uncle Johnson's. Some seemed to be alive and some dead. After sermon, a company of us went to Newent to hear Mr. Meachem [of Coventry] and Sir Judd. Something of a stir, and some very bold opposers. 15. Rode with Mr. Meachem and Uncle Elisha Paine to the West Farms. Meachem preached. Considerable stir. 18. Mills preached. Brother Ebenezer taken into the church. 19. Attends the Lower End meeting. Sir Lewis did well, and they were all-filled. 21. A meeting at Uncle Elisha Paine's. 22. My father relates his experience. 23. Mills preached. Walk with Mr. Bradford among the hills to pray. Heard of a bird's crowing before a man's door at Saybrook. 24. Hear of the death of Mr. Samuel Adams. 25. Mills preached. Sir Judd is to preach at Plainfield. 26. Spend the forenoon in the mill-house in prayer and reading the Scriptures. In the afternoon, Mills gave a funeral discourse on Samuel Adams. The children of God were very live at the funeral. A spirit of exhortation was poured down upon them. Two persons were struck into conviction. 27. Exceeding full of the spirit; people had a brave meeting. 28. Went to hear Mr. Mills. 29. Spent the forenoon at Obadiah Johnson's and in traveling, talking with various people. 30. Mr. Wadsworth preached. A company went out to Henry Cleveland's, and had a considerable meeting. A great revival there. May 1. Went with Sir Lewis and others to Mr. Avery's. 2. Mr. Avery preached. Widow Spalding came out, full of joy. 3. Went to the trooping, and staid a few minutes. 4. Went to Preston, where Mr. Mosely [of Canada Parish] preached. Considerable stir. Some distressed and some rejoicing. 6. Mr. Mosely preached exceeding well, from Luke xxii: 48. Revival among Christians, and a stir among sinners. 7. Mr. Mosely preached from Hebrews; 'Wherefore as the Holy Ghost saith, Harden not your hearts.' Then, Mr. Mills preached from Malachi ii: 7. 9. Sabbath. Mr. Mills preached all day, considerably well. This day, old Chuffery was struck into convictions while Solomon Paine was exhorting him. 10. Went to Woodstock to visit class-mates. Had a great contest at night with Joseph Morse and one Childs concerning the worship of God. 11. Went to see John Morse; called at Joshua Chandler's where they sang a hymn."

Great religious interest and activity are indicated by this report with a tendency to enthusiasm and extravagance, but no flagrant excesses nor opposition and division in the church are yet manifest. Religion was evidently the dominant theme and the church warmly engaged in Christian labor. Quite probably there was even then a moderate party not in sympathy with the revival, but the only discernible symptom

of any lack of harmony at this period was their inability to unite in choice of a minister. As the church had never formally accepted Saybrook Platform, and some of its members were extremely opposed to it, they were anxious to ascertain and settle their status with regard to government. Deacons Backus and Brown, with Colonel John Dyer, Elisha Paine and Obadiah Johnson were accordingly appointed a committee, "to search into the former constitution of the church and make return," and were now engaged in this investigation.

The legislative enactments of May, 1742, wholly changed the aspect of affairs. The Government of Connecticut, alarmed by the growing disorders, had convened, at its own expense, in Guilford, the preceding autumn, a General Consociation of churches, "for the accommodation of difficulties, settling peace, love and charity, and promoting the interests of vital religion." That body attributed the increasing excesses and disorders mainly to the intrusion of unauthorized itinerants and exhorters, and declared, "That for a minister to enter another minister's parish, and preach or administer the seals of the covenant, without the consent of, or in opposition to, the settled minister of the parish, is disorderly." To prevent such intrusions and the intermeddling of any Association with affairs, which by the Saybrook Platform belonged properly to another, the General Assembly, at its following session, passed "An Act for regulating abuses and correcting disorders in ecclesiastical affairs." This act provided:—

I. That if any ordained minister or person licensed to preach should preach or exhort in any parish not immediately under his charge, without express invitation from the minister or lawful authority of such parish, he should forfeit the benefit of the Colonial law made for the support of the gospel ministry.

II. That a member of any particular Association of ministers who should undertake to examine or license any candidate for the ministry within the province of any other Association, should also lose the benefit of the law for his support.

III. That if any minister should presume to preach in any parish not under his immediate care, without lawful permission, the minister on whom he had intruded should give information in writing to the clerk of the parish where such offending minister belonged, and no officer should sign a warrant for the collecting any minister's rate without first receiving a certificate from the clerk of the parish that no such information had been received.

IV. That any person whatsoever, not a settled and ordained minister, who should go into any parish and, without express invitation from the minister or constituted authorities, publicly preach and exhort, upon complaint being made, should be bound to his peaceable and good behavior until the next County Court in the sum of one hundred pounds; the Court, if they saw meet, further binding the persons offending at their pleasure.

V. That any foreigner or stranger, not an inhabitant of the colony, ordained, licensed or otherwise, who should presume to preach, teach or publicly exhort in any town or society within Connecticut Colony, without lawful permission from the minister or major part of the church, should "be sent (as a vagrant person), by warrant from any one assistant or justice of the peace, from constable to constable, out of the bounds of this Colony."

This arbitrary Act excited great debate and opposition, and only aggravated the evils it sought to restrain. Friends of the Revival,



awakened Christians and new converts, rejoicing in the liberty where-with Christ had made them free, found themselves restricted in their dearest privileges. Those precious Evangelists and exhorters who had so refreshed and comforted their souls, were to a great degree excluded from their pulpits. Free religious conferences like those previously enjoyed in Canterbury were no longer possible. Fervent laymen had no right to speak in such meetings without permission from constituted authority. Informal interchanges between Christians of adjoining parishes were now unlawful. The brethren in Canterbury, who had enjoyed such unusual liberty, wholly refused to submit to this yoke of bondage. They listened to itinerants, held their accustomed meetings, and continued to pray and exhort without regard to the new enactment. Colonel Dyer, with a few followers, supported the Government, and protested against these unlawful meetings, but his remonstrance was unavailing. Their right to speak and pray when they chose was loudly maintained by the rebellious Revivalists. Their meetings became more turbulent and disorderly. Fierce denunciations of the Government and the new law were mingled with their exhortations. The ministers who submitted to this law were denounced and repudiated. The friends of the Government banded themselves more strongly together, and attempted to suppress these meetings by the civil power with which they were invested. Those religious gatherings, in which a few months previous all had united with such apparent love and harmony, were now lawless and disorderly conventicles, liable at any moment to be interrupted and dispersed by the warrant of the constable. The Revival party was thus thrown into open collision with the Government of the Colony, and strife and division were rapidly fomented. Ministers recommended or procured by one party were rejected by the other, and the prospect of renewed settlement in gospel order and ordinances became very doubtful. So notorious were the disturbances in church and town, that reports of them found their way into the newspapers. "A gentleman of veracity" thus writes to the Boston Gazette:—

"Dec. 16, 1742. Canterbury is in worse confusion than ever. Their minister has left them, and they grow more noisy and boisterous so that they can get no minister to preach to them yet. Colonel Dyer exerted his authority among them on the Lord's Day, endeavoring to still them when many were exhorting and making a great hubbub, and ordered the constable to do his office, but they replied, 'Get thee behind me, Satan!' and the noise and tumult increased to such a degree, for above an hour, that the exhorter could not begin his exercise. Lawyer Paine has set up for a preacher . . . and makes it his business to go from house to house and town to town to gain proselytes to this new religion. Consequences are much feared."

• Elisha Paine had, indeed, as above-reported, now taken the field as a public exhorter. In the preceding summer he had received, as he believed, a divine call to preach the Gospel, and after much prayer and

self-examination applied to some of the neighboring ministers for approbation, and was told that he could not receive a regular license to preach without subscribing to the Saybrook Platform as the Ecclesiastic Constitution of Connecticut. Mr. Paine had always opposed this Platform, as claiming powers unwarranted by Scripture, and recent developments had strengthened his dislike and opposition. Further reflection satisfied him that his own internal call was a far more valid commission than a license conferred by an unscriptural Association, and he commenced preaching from house to house, and then from town to town, without the sanction of any ecclesiastic authority. Crossing the Colony bounds into Woodstock, February 19, 1743, he attempted to hold a meeting at the house of Mr. John Morse. Hearing of the intrusion, Constable Wright was sent to arrest him. He was allowed to sing the 23d Psalm, and then carried before Colonel Chandler, who had issued the warrant, expecting him to give bonds and be speedily released. It not being clear to him to give such bond, he was sent to Worcester, where John Chandler, Jun. also offered to take bond, according to the warrant. Paine desired until morning to consider the proposal, but after he had laid his head upon his pillow "had such a sense of the contempt that was cast upon the truths of God's Word by the warrant" that he could not give bond, and so was committed "unto the dirtiest prison" he ever saw. He begged a broom, and swept a place to walk in, and experienced the sweetest contentment in and resignation to the will of God. Colonel Ward and many others offered to be his bail, "but conscience forbade a compliance."

Mr. Paine remained in prison till after his trial in May, during which time he was visited by many ministers and learned men, striving to convince him of his errors, but he "had rather tears given him to weep for them than faith to pray for them." Many rose up against him, and "even the abjects said all manner of evil of him," yet he was greatly sustained and comforted. Meetings held by him, though threatened by authority, were not broken up, and many were hopefully converted, so that his bonds fell out rather to the furtherance of the Gospel. Great sympathy was felt for him in Canterbury and adjoining towns. Hearing "that he was in danger of being wronged by an unjust presentment" of his previous character and standing, the following testimony in his behalf was sent by well known ministers:—

"From the knowledge we then had of him, we were of the opinion that he was qualified and that it was his duty to preach the Gospel. And we think it our duty to give our testimony for him, that he is, so far as we know or have ever heard, of a regular Christian life and conversation; and we esteem him sound in the faith, and of good understanding in the doctrines of the Gospel of Christ.

ELEAZER WHEELOCK, Lebanon.

BENJAMIN POMEROY, Hebron.

JOSEPH MEACHAM, Coventry.

SAMUEL MOSELY, Canada Parish."

Lebanon, March 10, 1743.

This document was accompanied by a note from Mr. Mosely, with words of cheer and encouragement. His brother Solomon and other Christian friends visited and aided him, and at his trial in Worcester, May 13, he was discharged as having been imprisoned without law.

### III.

RECOGNITION OF CAMBRIDGE PLATFORM. ATTEMPTS TO CHOOSE A MINISTER. REJECTION OF MR. ADAMS. REBUKE OF PROTESTERS. MEETINGS OF CONSOCIATION AND COUNCIL.

THE religious controversy in Canterbury was now assuming a more definite character. A church-meeting was held, January 27, 1743, to receive the report of the committee of investigation. This meeting was legally warned and fully attended. Deacon Backus was chosen standing moderator; Deacon Brown, standing clerk. Deacons Backus and Brown, Colonel Dyer, and Messrs. Johnson and Paine, who had carefully examined the records, acts and votes of the church, then presented this unanimous report:—

“That ye platform of church discipline, agreed upon by ye Synod, at Cambridge, 1648, consisting of learned persons from the four Colonies, is most agreeable to the former and designed practice of this church (except their having ruling elders or distinct officers), and most agreeable to the Scriptures.”

This report was accepted by a unanimous vote of the church. No one pretended at this meeting that the Saybrook Platform had ever been accepted by the church, or was designed to govern it in future. Even Colonel Dyer—the leading opposer to the Revival party—admitted that Cambridge Platform was most agreeable to its “former and designed practice.” The point of difference between the parties was the power allowed by that Platform. Several persons had brought letters of recommendation to the Canterbury church, and were anxious to be admitted to its membership. The Revival party claimed that in accordance with the ancient usage of Massachusetts churches they could receive such persons into the church by vote of a majority of the members, in the absence of a pastor. It was therefore put to vote:—

“That it is regular for this church to admit persons into this church that are in full communion with other churches and come regularly to this.”

Colonel Dyer and Edward Raynsford protested earnestly against this vote as illegal and revolutionary, but it was carried by a clear majority. The right thus claimed was speedily exercised.

“April 7, 1743. At a meeting of the first church of Christ in said town, Dea. Backus being moderator, Obadiah Johnson was chosen clerk. Benajah

Douglas, Salmon Wheat, Samuel Parish, Ebenezer Bacon, Ebenezer Cleveland, William Fitch, Joseph Bacon, Abraham Paine, Jun., Joseph and Elizabeth Johnson, all padrousing satificuts from the pastors of divers churches, with consent of the brethren that they were in full communion and regular standing in said churches, and being recommended to ye watch and care of this church, it was voted, 'That they may be admitted to all church privileges in this church.' Also, 'That the Rev. Mr. Wadsworth, Solomon Paine and Obadiah Johnson be a committee to discors with and examen persons on the grounds of their faith and spirital experiences that manafest their desire of joining to this or nabring churches, that belong to this society, and also to take care that proper means be taken to reclaim those that may fall into and continue in open and scandalous sin or sins, that do or may belong to this church.'"

The rights of the church as paramount to those of the society were next asserted by the progressive Revivalists. Hitherto, they had merely objected to candidates selected by the society—the society retorting by locking the meeting-house against their favorite exhorters—now they claimed the right to take the initiative, choose, call and settle a minister. Benajah Douglas, one of the newly-admitted members, was exceedingly earnest and zealous. He, with Solomon Paine, Obadiah Johnson and others, in view of "the great difficulties and disadvantages the church had long labored under for want of a spiritual pastor, and that all indeavors in conjunction with the society had proved abortive," humbly prayed—that there might be a meeting of the brethren in full communion, properly warned, "that after asking counsel of the Wonderful Counsellor, they may, by direction of his blessed Word and Spirit, consider what may be done, and proceed in that affair as they shall find it their duty, in order to procure a pastor to take the oversight of said church, who is a man after God's own heart."

In compliance with this request, a church meeting for the object specified, was duly warned by lawful authority. This bold assumption of the right of independent church government greatly alarmed the conservative party in Canterbury, and they rallied in full strength to oppose it. The meeting was held, May 5, 1743, and largely attended by both parties. Colonel Dyer, as leader of the opposition, attempted to forestall all action "by beginning to bring arguments and raise objections, and assuring the church they were wrong in what they were going to do." The moderator desired him to forbear till after prayer. One of the brethren moved, "That the church should join to ask counsel of God, in the first place, according to the warning," whereupon Colonel Dyer, with a loud voice, bade him "Hold his tongue till he had done, for the meeting was so disorderly and for contention that he would not join in prayer, and when the moderator spake to the church to join in prayer, he, in a hasty manner, went out." Returning after a time, he found the church debating the proper steps to procure a pastor, objected to their proceedings and declined to vote, but pointed



at those who did, saying, "See what a small number there is, and some of them have no freehold estate and do they think to come begging to the society for that power, and can anybody think that the society shall hear them!" A brother replied, "That they were not about to beg the society's power, and cited a text to prove the church's power." "I wonder," said the angry Colonel, "that you are not ashamed to talk so." "Be careful," was the reply, "how you speak against it, for it is Scripture." "Silence! you sorry fellow!" roared the Colonel. "I will have no exhorting here," and "when entreated to forbear, went out without asking leave."

Colonel Dyer's remonstrances were so far effectual that a committee was appointed, "to draw up something to lay before the society, in desiring that they would be willing that the church might nominate some meet person to preach in said society upon probation, in order to be the pastor of that church." This request, if preferred, was not granted, the society having already invited Mr. Strong to preach for three months, by the advice of the County Association. The church continuing its efforts, at an adjourned meeting, May 9, voted:—

"I. That we set apart Wednesday, 18 of this instant, for fasting and prayer, to humble ourselves before ye Lord, to seek a right way to obtain a faithful gospel minister.

II. That we send to the Rev. Messrs. Williams of Lebanon, Benj. Lord of Norwich, Hezekiah Lord of Preston, Mosely, Wheelock and White of Windham, to come to our assistance.

III. That Captain Johnson and Solomon Paine wate upon the Rev'd jentelman, to desier their presents and assistance.

IV. That Capt. Johnson and Solomon Paine waite upon the society's committee for the keys to open the meeting-house to assemble in upon the fast.

V. That Deacon Beacons, Capt. Johnson, Josiah Cleveland, Solomon Paine and Benajah Douglas wate upon the fore-named rev'd ministers after public service to ask their advice in respect to our resetelment.

VI. That Stephen Gates be received under the watch and to ye church privileges of this church."

Whether meeting-house was procured and fast held is not reported. Mr. Strong arrived, was heard and condemned. At a church-meeting, May 26, it was put to vote:—

"I. Whether they would improve Mr. Thomas Strong on probation, in order to be pastor of this church, and it passed in the negative.

II. Whether this church concur with the society in improving Mr. Samuel Hopkins in supplying the pulpit according to ye late vote of said society, provided Mr. Strong don't come and supply ye pulpit ye hull term of time exprest in said society vote, and it passed in the affirmative."

The society probably refused to concur with the church in improving Mr. Hopkins, and retained Mr. Strong for the time specified. Mr. Adams, next procured, was equally unsatisfactory. The church called a meeting to consider his preaching, and appointed a committee to

show him his errors. Their report is subjoined as a specimen of the inquisitorial spirit of the day, and the requirements of the Revivalists:

“CANTERBURY, *Sep.* 7, 1743.

To the Church of Christ now met by adjournment:—

DEARLY BELOVED: According to your order, we, the subscribers, waited upon Mr. Adams, informed him that the church was dissatisfied, and gave him a copy of the church's vote concerning his sermons, I. Cor. x: 31, and in answer to what the church saith of the general run of said sermons (in that they imply that man hath a power to glorify God, not implying that the new birth is necessary) he saith, ‘That he was preaching to Christians, and they had passed through the new birth, and therefore it was not needful to show the necessity of it.’ We asked him, ‘Whether he thought that all who heard him were such?’

ADAMS. ‘No! but all that I directed my discourse to were.’

COM. ‘It did not appear so by the terms used in addressing them.’

A. ‘In opening the text, I did show that the Apostle writ to the Christians at Corinth, and that showed that I was preaching to Christians. Is not that true?’

C. ‘It is true the *Apostle* did as you say, but in your doctrine, the foundation of your discourse, you address them under the general denomination of men, which is not peculiar to Christians, but when it is used by way of distinction it denotes men in their natural estate.’

A. ‘Women heard me, too, and you may say I did not preach to *them* because I did not call them women.’

C. ‘Preaching up duty and works as terms of life is dangerous.’

A. ‘I did not say they were terms of life but what Christians ought to do because they were redeemed, which I laid down as an obligation to obedience, and also showed that I was showing Christians their duty, and ought they not to do those duties that I laid down?’

C. ‘Many of them were duties that ought to be done, and the doing of them to be pressed upon Christians, but you did not show that faith in Jesus Christ and the love of God in the soul were absolutely necessary in order to glorify God in doing them.’

A. ‘I did mention faith and love, with several other things, as necessary.’

C. ‘But inasmuch as you put them with several other things, and then said that all or some of them were necessary, you so left it in your sermon that people might take the other and leave out faith and love, as not being so absolutely necessary.’

A. ‘I could not help that, and nobody would take my sermons as the church hath represented, except they were prejudiced against me.’

C. ‘Some that like your preaching *have* taken it so, and say they are of opinion that if a man doth what he can he shall be accepted.’

A. ‘You need not fear it hurting *you*, knowing you are converted as you say.’

C. ‘Our hearts are so apt to deceive us on that point, we earnestly desire to have the Word divided aright after we have been enlightened and sanctified in part, but we look upon it most dangerous for those poor souls that are dead in sins, for they know of no other way but to do and live. . . . One of us was discoursing with a man in this town concerning that point, and the man said, “That God doth not require anything of any man but what he hath given power to do.”’

A. ‘It is true that God hath given him power to do all that he requires of him.’

COM. ‘Has God given every man power to believe?’

A. ‘Was any man ever lost who did what he could to save himself, or towards his own salvation?’

When we had heard what he, as above-written, saith to the general expression the church had taken, we then discoursed of the particulars that were in themselves contrary to sound doctrine, viz., that it is not necessary in every particular to . . . *[illegible]* . . . the Glory of God, and he, to rectify that point asked, ‘Whether perfect sinless obedience was required under the Gospel?’

COM. 'Nothing but a perfect righteousness would be accepted.'

A. 'We are not under the Law, but under Grace.'

COM. 'Shall we continue in sin because we are not under the Law?'

A. 'No. But would you have me preach that man must have a perfect sinless obedience?'

COM. 'They must aim at and endeavor after it, but it is in their aims that you have left such room, and that makes it the more dangerous, and in your saying that it matters not much whether a man knows precisely whether the reward of happiness or the glory of God be the chief motive to put him upon doing, &c., we look upon it to be the more dangerous, because we are of opinion that that is the most necessary and most difficult point to know in self-examination.'

A. 'What goes before and follows after in my sermon guards against this danger.'

COM. 'You have not said anything in your sermons that implied that there were any that were in danger of perishing in the state they were in.'

A. 'I did, in showing how they should come to God, imply that as plainly as if I had said it in plain words.'

COM. 'But you did not tell them they had no legs nor power to come, and they were dead.'

A. 'Christians have legs, and such I was preaching to.'

We informed him that the church would meet on this day, and we desired him to be present at this meeting. He said he was going out of town. We asked him what answer we should give the church on the premises. He said, he cared not what, and left us.

SOLOMON PAINE.

THOMAS BRADFORD.

BENAJAH DOUGLAS."

The church, on receiving this report, manifested by vote their dislike of Mr. Adams' doctrines, and adjourned their meeting to September 12, "that ye light may be made manifest to all in that respect," requesting the presence of the offending candidate and all the brethren of the church. Mr. Adams not appearing, the church voted, "That they were still dissatisfied with what he had delivered in his sermons," and requested Solomon Paine and others, "To draw up something in the name of the church, to be publicly communicated at ye next public lecture, to show their dislike and resentment of such preaching." Wednesday, October 12, was again set apart for a day "of solemn fasting and prayer to Almighty God, that he would revive his work among us, and show us wherefore it is that he hath frowned upon our former endeavors for the settlement of the Gospel in this place, and bless us in our present endeavors for that end." Another important matter also engaged the attention of the church. At the meeting called to consider Mr. Adams' doctrines and to take some proper steps for the obtaining of a spiritual pastor, a paper was presented, signed by Colonel Dyer, Captain Cobb, Edward Raynsford, Stephen Frost, Solomon Adams, David Munroe and others, protesting against the proceedings of the church, declaring "That they did it to make themselves strong, and were still fond of their own wills, and had put the society to great charge by their illegal acts." It being a sudden thing, the church was at first too much overcome to consider whether these

brethren were chargeable with a fault in what they had done, but soon recovered itself sufficiently to warn a meeting expressly to consider the protest, and nearly all the protesters being present, spent a whole afternoon and evening in "discoursing on the premises on both sides." Colonel Dyer and his supporters were unable to show any just grounds for the charges alleged, only their own opinions and doubts; declined to own themselves in the wrong, take the opinion of the learned, or confer privately with particular persons. Another meeting was then appointed, "to see what their fault was, in order to tell them their fault, in order to restore them." At the appointed time, November 4, the protesters were still of the same mind, whereupon, the church proceeded to tell them that in the opinion of the church, "they were guilty of evil surmising, irregular and unchristian treatment and disorderly behavior towards the church." The brethren refusing to explain, retract, or acknowledge themselves in fault, after much discussion, the church ordered, "That a letter of admonition be sent to them as matter of conviction." The admonition was prepared and publicly administered, but failed to bring the refractory brethren to submission.

The church, after condemning Mr. Adams, invited Rev. Samuel Buell to preach on probation, but were unable to make any permanent or satisfactory arrangements under the circumstances. A majority in the society opposed the Revival party. Major Fitch, it will be remembered, had admitted some "vagabond fellows" among the early inhabitants of Canterbury, and an unusually large proportion of its population was without the church, and indifferent or hostile to religion. The bold denunciations of the Revival preachers and exhorters had aroused the hostility of this irreligious class, and they gladly co-operated with Colonel Dyer in enforcing the laws and resisting the encroachments of the church. Finding that all attempts at mutual accommodation were fruitless, that the breach was continually widening, and no legal settlement of a minister possible, both parties were driven to seek relief from abroad. The disturbed condition of affairs in Canterbury had greatly scandalized both friends and enemies of the Revival, and neighboring ministers gladly availed themselves of the invitation to aid and advise in effecting a settlement. A minority of the church, representing a majority of the society, summoned the Windham County Consociation to hear and judge of the subsisting difficulties, and invited Deacon Backus, Obadiah Johnson, Solomon Paine and others differing from them in opinion, "as brethering aggrieved, to join them in laying the whole matters of difficulty before this body. The majority of the church, having formally accepted Cambridge Platform, could not recognize the authority of a body constituted by Saybrook form of discipline,



and declined to accept the offer, but invited a number of ministers favoring the Revival, with messengers from their respective churches, to meet in council and "judge respecting the difficulties caused by a number of y<sup>e</sup> brethren causing divisions in the church by their conduct." Mr. Elisha Paine, who had been itinerating through the summer but was now in Canterbury, was appointed "to represent y<sup>e</sup> church in laying the matter before said council, and also to advise with said council respecting y<sup>e</sup> resettlement of a gospel minister over us."

Both bodies met in Canterbury, December 12, 1743—a goodly number of ministers and messengers, friends and opponents of the Revival, all deeply anxious to restore peace and harmony to this distracted people and settle a gospel minister over them. The conventions of the Consociation were held at the meeting-house. The ministers present were Messrs. Ebenezer Williams, Coit, Eliot, Cabot, Avery, Devotion and Bass; the messengers, Samuel Nightingale, William Marsh, Gershom Clark, David Hamilton, William Larned, Joseph Holland, Joseph Davison, John Bass and Josiah Bugbee. After humble supplication for direction and assistance, Messrs. Dyer, Raynsford, Brown, Frost and Smith, as committee in behalf of a number of the Canterbury church, laid before them a paper containing the following matters of grievance with certain members of the church:—

- "1. Their admitting members into the church without a pastor.
2. Trying and judging points of doctrine by a major vote.
3. Their challenging it to be their right to choose a minister for ye society.
4. Their voting that Mr. Strong should not be called upon probation for their pastor, notwithstanding ye Association advised him and far the greatest part of ye society were for obtaining him.
5. Their judging and condemning Mr. Adams' doctrine by a vote . . .
6. And when a great number of ye brethren show their dislike to several of these acts by giving their reasons, (though in soft terms), they were judged and condemned for evil surmisings, irregular and unchristian treatment and disorderly behavior . . . and warrants sent out for them to come before them to receive conviction, and did proceed publicly to admonish some in their meeting, and Captain Johnson and Solomon Paine went about to admonish others in ye name of ye Lord Jesus Christ."

Copies of the citation sent to the offending members, and their refusal to appear, were also laid before the Consociation. A formal invitation was now sent to them by the elders and messengers, to which the committee replied, "That we cannot answer your request to appear before you as a Consociation in the name of our church, they being a Congregational Church according to Saybrook Platform, and according thereto have called a council, consisting of elders and messengers sent by y<sup>e</sup> neighboring churches, that are now sitting at the house of Captain Wadsworth as an open council; free for any person to hear that desires light, and we have no power from the church to confer or advise with any other council or persons." The Consociation, upon this

refusal, proceeded to hear and consider the evidences and pleas made and given by the aggrieved brethren and “came into ye following resolves and judgments:—

“Query. Whether it appears to ye Council that ye said church in Canterbury, from ye beginning of it, has been Congregational according to Cambridge Platform?

Resolved unanimously: That it does not by any explicit act of theirs, but on ye contrary, it is manifest by their practice that they have always acted agreeable to the Constitution of this Colony, as was evident to us by a great variety of instances and especially by *one* since the removal of their late pastor—in sending Mr. Elisha Paine to a consociation at Windham, and he acting therewith and being by them made choice of as a delegate to ye Gen. Consociation at Guilford, and there voluntarily acting as a member of said Consociation.

2. Whether a vote of a number of the brethren of ye church, made Jan. 27, 1743, doth denominate them to be a Congregational church according to Cambridge Platform? Resolved, unanimously, in ye negative. Inasmuch as it appears to us that ye brethren had not sufficient notice given them that ye meeting was for that purpose . . . and part of them were not present at said meeting, and others who voted did not sufficiently understand ye vote, nor by any means designed to recede from the Ecclesiastical Constitution of the Government . . . Furthermore, we are of opinion, that although ye brethren *had been* regularly warned, it would have been an *infringement on ye natural rights and liberties of mankind* for any number of them, without the consent of the rest, to hold them to any constitution they were not before under and did not consent to. And therefore we judge that the first church in Canterbury still remains a church agreeable to ye Ecclesiastic Constitution of this Colony, and not a Congregational Church according to Cambridge Platform. And this church not being Congregational had no right—nor could it be expedient had they been under the Constitution they pretended they were—to admit members into ye church without a pastor; nor to judge and determine by a major vote as in ye case of Mr. Adams; nor to supersede ye vote of ye society for a candidate to preach among them . . . as in ye case of Mr. Strong; nor to judge, condemn and formally to admonish a number of their brethren, and especially for those things in their protest which appear to us (although some of them rash and unadvisable) not to be censurable . . . and although these unprecedented acts are invalid and might be thought under some circumstances to deserve a censure; yet, considering ye great temptations which this people are laboring under by reason of ye dissensions in those matters where men’s consciences may be concerned . . . we judge: That the brethren of this church should mutually forgive each other their hard speeches and uncharitable conduct and for the future should act in conformity unto and in conjunction with each other . . . Wherefore, we beseech you brethren, let all bitterness and wrath and clamor and evil-speaking be put away from you with all malice . . . We desire the church and congregation (as soon as may be) to call a number of neighboring ministers, viz., the Rev. Mr. Lord of Preston, Mr. Mosely, Mr. Avery, Mr. Devotion, to join with and assist them in keeping a day of solemn fasting and prayer to God on ye account of their broken and unsettled and lamentable circumstances. We also advise the people to apply to Mr. Lee or Mr. Cogswell of Lebanon, and in case they don’t succeed with them, to Mr. Wells, now keeping school at Hartford, to preach among them on probation.”

The council of ministers and messengers—the Reverends Joseph Meacham, Hezekiah Lord, Joseph Fish, Benjamin Pomeroy and David Jewett, Deacons Samuel Parker, Nathaniel Brown and Joshua Raymond, and Messrs. Jonathan White, Daniel Fitch and Joseph Lee—was sitting meanwhile at the house of Captain Joseph Wadsworth, near the meeting-house. The protest of the aggrieved brethren and

the consequent action of the church, were first laid before it, but as all the light that seemed needful could not be obtained for want of a greater freedom between the church and dissenting brethren, the council was laid "under some incapacity to give a compleat judgment in y<sup>e</sup> case." It noticed "with great grief a want of mutual forbearance and charity, found harsh and uncharitable expressions in y<sup>e</sup> brethren's paper, and was very sorry that the church was so rash and precipitate in some measures they had taken with said brethren, particularly in the solemn admonition read to them, and therefore advised both parties to serious self-reflections and mutual confessions, forgiveness and charity." With respect to the grievous difficulty they had so long labored under for want of a pastor, it offered the following "sentiments and advice:—

"1. That every religious society hath a right (being destitute) to nominate and call a candidate or probationer for ye gospel ministry, according to ye custom of God's visible people.

2. That it belongs to ye *church* to call ye pastor to office, so that,

3. No tyranny or unjust imputation either of ye society ever ye church or of ye church over ye society, may be exercised.

4. That their mutual interests being thus blended together, they ought always to endeavor as much as in them lies to act in concord and mutual agreement in such important affairs. Hence,

5. No society may be hasty, rash or precipitant in censuring or publicly blaming ye conduct of ye church, although they should from time to time, conscientiously negative ye choice of a candidate for ye ministry; but must exercise great patience and condescension, endeavoring by Scripture and reason with meekness and gentleness to convince them wherein they think them out of the way—and no less are ye obligations of ye church towards ye society in like cases. And now, in order to your happy agreement in calling and settling a pastor, we can think of no better expedient, than—

1. For the church and society to agree together in keeping a day of fasting and prayer, to implore pardon for past offences, and ye direction and blessing of the Great Shepherd of ye sheep that they may obtain a faithful pastor; and that they call in such assistance as ye church and society think fit.

2. That ye church and society do lovingly agree to call upon probation for ye settlement in ye ministry among them, either Mr. Lee or Mr. Cogswell, both of Lebanon, or Mr. Conant of Bridgewater, and in ye interim . . . desire neighboring ministers to supply ye pulpit . . . It seems to us not expedient for this church in their present broken state and divided sentiments to be forward to exercise church discipline, especially in censuring offenders, except in case of special necessity, and that with good advice to direct and strengthen you in it under the conduct of some neighboring minister as moderator of ye meeting. With respect to the admission of members (not excluding any that have been already admitted), we advise the church for the future to call in the help of some neighboring pastor.

And finally, brethren, we commend you to God, wishing that grace, mercy and peace may be multiplied unto you through our Lord Jesus Christ."

## IV.

CALL OF MR. JAMES COGSWELL AS CANDIDATE. DISAFFECTION.  
PROTEST. WITHDRAWAL OF MAJORITY. IMPRISONMENT  
OF ELISHA PAINE. CALL OF SOCIETY.  
OPPOSITION OF CHURCH.

THE conciliatory efforts of the good ministers and messengers were not without effect. Their reproofs were received with meekness; their counsels—if unpalatable—followed. The belligerents laid down their arms and enjoyed a brief armistice. The church was summoned to meet at the meeting-house, December 28, “To consider its conduct towards the protesting brethren and their conduct towards the church, in order to heal the breach, that the enjoined fast might not be with, nor for, strife and debate—each one considering how he can expect to be heard while there is any envying one against another.” After suitable self-reflection and, possibly, interchanges of confession and forgiveness, the church consented to hear on probation the candidate selected by the society—Mr. James Cogswell of Lebanon—who had been recommended both by Consociation and Council. Mr. Cogswell promptly obeyed the call, and church and society, Revivalists and Anti-revivalists once more assembled together in the well-filled meeting-house to attend his public ministrations. The young gentleman thus called to heal the breach and harmonize the discordant elements then working in Canterbury, was in many respects admirably fitted for the difficult and delicate office. From childhood, he had been noted for love of study and conviction of the truth of Christian doctrine, and after graduation from Yale in 1742, had devoted himself with much earnestness and diligence to preparation for the Gospel ministry. He was a good logician and a graceful speaker, moderate in his own opinions and tolerant of those of others, mild in temper and affable in manner, dignified in the pulpit and conciliatory in private. All parties were pleased with the address and amiability of the young candidate, and listened to him for a brief period with apparent satisfaction. But no man or minister, however wise, or eloquent, or godly, could long preach acceptably to two organized parties holding religious views that were diametrically opposite. The points of difference between these parties were too vital and radical to admit of accommodation. In the violent fermentation of thought and feeling following the great religious movement, great changes had been evolved. Beliefs, traditions and practices which for many years had prevailed in the churches, when scrutinized by the new spiritual light



were pronounced unscriptural and dangerous. Not only had unconverted men been admitted to certain Christian privileges while without the church, but many had been received into the membership of the church without satisfactory evidence of regeneration. A thorough purification and sifting of the church was demanded by the Revival party—the cutting off of dead, doubtful and half-way members—and for living members, a fuller Christian liberty. The ecclesiastic domination exercised by the Government of Connecticut was now strenuously denounced by Elisha Paine and the more advanced Revival leaders. They believed the whole system of parish administration a usurpation of power wholly opposed to Scripture, and that each individual local church should call, settle and support its minister, and manage all its spiritual and secular concerns. With such pronounced opinions and progressive leaders, it was impossible that the Revival party in Canterbury should long be satisfied with their very conservative young candidate. As the novelty wore away, it became more and more apparent that his preaching failed to manifest or enforce that deep spiritual experience which they deemed so essential. That keen discernor, Elisha Paine, pronounced his sermons, with all their polish and eloquence, “nothing but trifling,” and declared that he “would rather be burnt at the stake than hear such preaching.” When, in addition to this unfavorable judgment, it was found that Mr. Cogswell supported the Saybrook Platform, did not insist upon the relation of experience, and allowed the Half-way Covenant, their short-lived prepossession vanished. After a few months’ trial, the Revival party again abandoned the meeting-house and the stated Sabbath worship, and held separate meetings in private houses under the leadership of itinerants and exhorters.

The congregation and a minority of the church, on the other hand, were greatly pleased with the ministerial qualifications and conversation of Mr. Cogswell, and soon voted to employ him three months on probation, after applying for liberty to the Windham Association. A protest was at once entered by Elisha Paine and some twenty brethren, “against applying to y<sup>e</sup> Association for a minister to supply y<sup>e</sup> pulpit in this society, they being a body or power not owned by y<sup>e</sup> Congregational church of Christ, nor warranted by y<sup>e</sup> word of God.” The following paper, sent a few days later, more fully set forth their views :—

“The church of Christ in Canterbury first society, to the inhabitants of said society, who are not in full communion with the church :—

Whereas, we have waited long without a spiritual under-shepherd, in expectation of having ye society and ye church unite in ye same person, but hitherto all attempts having proved abortive, and ye man whom ye society have now voted to improve three months on probation, in order for a minister for themselves and a pastor for the church, we are of opinion, from what

acquaintance or knowledge we have had of him and his way of preaching, that he hath not those essential qualifications that ought to be in a minister of Jesus Christ; Do therefore declare to said society that we cannot join with you in improving of him in order for settlement here, but look upon it not only a privilege that Christ hath given to the church but an indispensable duty to choose one after God's own heart, one that will be able to comfort ye wounded with the same comfort wherewith he himself is comforted, and not a blind guide, for then will the blind be led by them into the eternal ditch of God's wrath, and their blood will be required at ye church's hands, since this care of choosing and trying of teachers is committed unto ye church. Rev. xxii: 20; Ezk. iii: 18; Acts xx: 26, 27, 31; Matt. vii: 15; Josh. xxv: 16, 17; Rev. xvi: 17, 18. *April 5, 1744.*"

The society paying no heed to this communication, a meeting was warned "to consider whether God in his providence did not call for fasting and prayer in this church . . . since there was such different apprehensions of things not only between church and society, but between y<sup>e</sup> church and many of its members, and so apparent that church and society cannot agree on the same sort of preachers and preaching . . . that the Lord would pour out of his Holy Spirit upon church and people, that we may all be of one faith, spirit and mind in the Lord." The third of May was accordingly selected as a day of special prayer for direction and guidance in the choice of a man after God's own heart, every way qualified according to the rules of the Gospel. Not only the church, but all the members of the society were entreated to attend this service, which was appointed in the meeting-house. Free liberty was given for all persons, either male or female, in full communion or otherwise, to join in this fast, provided they came for peace and not for strife and debate. Members in full communion were *required* to be present, that the whole of the day might be kept in humiliation and fasting unto the Lord and not to themselves, so there might be yet a blessing both for church and society, and they directed to a man that both could agree upon. The day was kept according to appointment, and after the services were concluded, the church voted, "To apply successively to Messrs. Conant of Bridgwater, Wadsworth of Milton, Samuel Buell and Nathan Strong to preach here on probation, in order to be our pastor." Solomon Paine, Captain Johnson and Deacon Backus were appointed to wait on these gentlemen.

The society was far too well satisfied with Mr. Cogswell to join in any effort for procuring another candidate. All thought or expectation of "finding a man that both could agree upon" had now vanished. Farther attempts to effect reconciliation or compromise were abandoned and hostilities re-opened with increased vigor and bitterness. Again was the meeting house locked upon the revivalists, and exclusively appropriated by Mr. Cogswell and his adherents, while their opponents, "like sheep scattered about upon the mountains, were compelled

to spend the precious day of the Lord under a general and lifeless preaching, or by worshipping elsewhere expose themselves to suffer the penalty of the Law." These penalties were now rigorously enforced. Benajah Douglas was arrested during this summer for unlawful exhorting or breaking the peace upon the Sabbath, and refusing to give bonds, was imprisoned in Windham jail. The greatest confusion and excitement prevailed. An attempt to levy a rate to pay for Mr. Cogswell's preaching added fresh fuel to the flame. A church-meeting was held, July 27, "to consider, what was proper to be done that we may meet with one accord in one place on y<sup>e</sup> Lord's day to worship, according to y<sup>e</sup> word of God and y<sup>e</sup> practice of y<sup>e</sup> church; also, whether the voice of God in his providence did not call for fasting and prayer; also, our duty with respect to settling the gospel ministry and ordinances; also, our duty with respect to *our paying for such preaching* as we cannot in conscience spend the Lord's day to hear."

A fast was accordingly held, August 7, when after prayerful deliberation, the church formally withdrew from the society for the following reasons:—

- "1. The society had called a minister not liked by the church.
2. By words and practice the society had shown itself opposed to the church in points of discipline.
3. The society had refused the use of the meeting-house to the church.
4. Many of the society were wont to speak reproachfully and blasphemously of what the church considered the work of ye Holy Spirit,—which things they looked upon as a loud call to them to come out from among them;—and therefore did appoint the house of Samuel Wadsworth to be a place to meet in by themselves to serve the Lord in spirit and in truth."

In accordance with this vote, the majority of the church met thenceforward statedly for religious worship at the house appointed, where, as no minister could yet be procured, services were conducted by Solomon Paine or some other lay member. The society, meanwhile, was considering how to proceed to call Mr. Cogswell to settlement in the face of this strong opposition and protest. The Reverends Ebenezer Williams, Hezekiah and Benjamin Lord and Samuel Mosely were summoned by them as an advisory council. The opponents of Mr. Cogswell were urged to lay their objections before this body, but as it had been called by the society without concurrence of the church, they refused to comply, but sent a paper to it, enclosing their former protest and reiterating their conviction, "that he hath not the essential qualifications which ought to be in a minister of Jesus Christ." As this assertion was unaccompanied by any evidence, the Council considered it "no bar to Mr. Cogswell's settlement, and as he had been examined and approbated by the Windham Association and recommended to Canterbury both by Consociation and these opposers' own Council, and there was danger that should this man be foregone in whom the society

and a part of the church were united, the difficulties and divisions might be greatly increased,"—it accordingly advised the said Mr. Cogswell and the society, "to proceed unto his settlement with all convenient speed, except the aggrieved brethren be barred in the way of their proceeding."

The concurrence of their former friend and sympathizer, Mr. Mosely, in this judgment was keenly felt by the Revivalists, and a "smart letter of reproof" was addressed to him by Elisha Paine, accusing him of "wronging the truth in calling that an aggrieved part which was *the church*," whereupon the writer was arrested, September 22, 1744, and brought before Nathaniel Huntington for trial, on charge of publicly preaching and exhorting on matters of religious doctrine and practice, at the house of Benjamin Cleveland in Scotland Parish. "The prisoner at the Bar, brought before the Court for preaching the Gospel of Jesus and exhorting a number of people—offered as plea, That the Court hath not jurisdiction of this case; for that the facts complained of are warranted by the Law of God and the King, and therefore not triable by any Court or law, inferior thereto." The Court judged the plea insufficient, and ordered the prisoner to give bonds of one hundred pounds for his peaceable and good behavior, which Mr. Paine refusing to do, he was committed to prison. His imprisonment on the sole presentment of "preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ," increased the number of his followers and greatly heightened the popular clamor and excitement. Crowds of people flocked around him at Windham jail, and so great was the desire to hear him, that by giving security to the keeper, he was allowed to preach in the jail-yard. Some zealous friends were so imprudent as to use the county boards and timber in making galleries and flooring for "convenient preaching at persons." Major Thomas Dyer and other supporters of the Government were greatly incensed at this, and threatened to report Sheriff Huntington to the Assembly. A subscription signed by twenty-seven persons was also sent to the Sheriff, desiring him "to shut the prison doors and keep y<sup>e</sup> people out." So great was the clamor that Mr. Huntington himself appealed to the Assembly, declaring that he had acted to his best judgment by the prisoners, and could not but think that the method used was most likely to bring those back that seem disposed for breaking off, and preserving us from greater breaches; that neither Paine nor Douglas had any hand in adding to the scaffolding nor had they made use of it; that he had confined Benajah Douglas in a close prison, but did not think Paine's writ sufficient to hold him, and as for the latter's holding forth against our just rules, he had not heard him so preach or exhort, nor observed such a thing in his private conversation, and thought the allegations were straining



things beyond their reality, Mr. Paine bore his imprisonment with his usual patience and serenity, "enjoying much spiritual comfort and communion, rejoicing that even there he was permitted to preach the Word, willing to tarry in that pleasant place just as long as his Father should see cause to use him there, assured that if he went from prison to Paradise, it would be as sweet as if he went from a throne, but with a strong persuasion of his speedy release." This persuasion was verified, October 19, the authorities finding it useless to retain him. Benajah Douglas, on giving bonds to Justice Dyer, "that he would carry good behavior towards all his Majesty's subjects, especially in Canterbury meeting-house on Sabbath day," was also released.

In compliance with the advice of their council, the society in Canterbury proceeded in September to give Mr. Cogswell a formal call to become their pastor, whereupon the church sent the following communication:—

"CANTERBURY, *Sept. 16, 1744.*

To the inhabitants of the first society in said town, now convened in order to settle Mr. Cogswell.

Dear Friends: We, the subscribers, inhabitants of said society, do hereby humbly show you, that whereas the church of Christ in this place hath always esteemed itself to be a Congregational church according to Cambridge Platform, as may appear by their renewal of their covenant upon the record, and this church hath heretofore showed you, by a writing delivered to your clerk, that this is a power and privilege given by Christ to his church to choose their own officers, pastors, &c., and desired you to join with them in seeking after a minister and pastor for this church and people.

But you being so far from that, that you have by your committee called the Consociation, and declared that you are not of the Congregational but of the Constitution made at Saybrook as established in this Government, and said Consociation being of the same mind with you . . . and you having ever since in your proceedings, put things relating to this affair to vote by way of conformity to said result, whereby the major part of this church and more of the inhabitants of this society who are members in full communion with other churches, are laid under a necessity to act contrary to them and our own consciences or not to act at all with you in this great and solemn affair; and again, secondly: This church having at their first settling and all that have since joined them, solemnly engaged by the assistance of the Holy Spirit to promote the worship of God in the power and spiritualness of it, and now, upon the acquaintance they have with Mr. Cogswell's preaching, &c., are of opinion that he hath not the essential qualifications that are necessary for that end, and therefore cannot in conscience vote for him . . . and Mr. Cogswell acting with you in conformity to the Consociation in contradistinction from, and in opposition to, the power and privilege of this church, we cannot in conscience act with you in settling of him in the ministry here, but do declare that if you take the advantage of the Law to settle him over us and take our estates to maintain him, you will *lord it* not only over the estates but the consciences of God's heritage, and we do hereby enter our protest against any votes being passed in this meeting in order to settle him over us and the rest of this church.

Joseph Jones.  
Thomas Bradford.  
Joseph Wadsworth.  
Abraham Paine.  
Benjamin Green.  
Joseph Bacon.  
David Carver.  
Joseph Adams.

Tryall Baker.  
Obadiah Johnson.  
John Carter.  
Noah Gilbert.  
Solomon Paine.  
Timothy Backus.  
Elisha Paine.  
Josiah Cleveland.

William Fitch.  
Elisha Cleveland.  
Jonathan Hide.  
Samuel Parish.  
Josiah Hide.  
Caleb Hide.  
Simeon Woodward.  
William Bradford."

The society paying no heed to this protest, but continuing their negotiations with Mr. Cogswell, another method was attempted. Threatening as was the aspect of affairs, the Revival party, as the majority of the church, did not yet anticipate the loss of church standing and privileges, but as they were willing that others should exercise that same liberty of choice they claimed for themselves, they now drew up a paper, agreeing, "That if those in the church and society who wished to settle Mr. Cogswell as their pastor and follow Saybrook Platform, would allow them their just proportion of the meeting-house they had helped build, and free them from all charge of Mr. Cogswell's settlement or support, they would oblige themselves to keep up and maintain the public worship of God according to the rules of the Gospel, and not look upon it as their duty to hinder the settlement of Mr. Cogswell, but otherwise should forbid his ordination by any council whatsoever." This proposition and threat shared the fate of the previous protest—receiving, apparently, no consideration from the society. Another effort to stay proceedings was made in the name of the society. Forty-nine inhabitants of the first society in Canterbury, many of them in full communion with the church, signed a document, October 29, certifying, "That they were of the Congregational principles of church discipline according to Cambridge, and not according to Saybrook Platform, that it was their hearts' desire and prayer to God that they might have a faithful minister of the New Testament, not of the letter but of the spirit, settled as pastor of this church, and although some of them did vote for Mr. Cogswell before they knew his principles, yet since it had become manifest that he was of Saybrook Regulation, and did not preach the Word of God in the power and demonstration of the Spirit as the Word of God saith the true ministers and prophets do—they most earnestly protested against his settlement."

## V.

PROCEEDINGS OF WINDHAM ASSOCIATION. COLLISION WITH  
YALE COLLEGE. CLEVELANDS ARRAIGNED AND CENSURED.  
CONSOCIATION AT CANTERBURY. COGSWELL ORDAINED.  
CHURCH DIVIDED.

THE position of affairs in Canterbury excited much interest and alarm throughout the Colony. The number and respectability of the Revival party, the ability and influence of its leaders, their boldness in asserting church rights and denouncing the ecclesiastic system of Connecticut, gave it unusual prominence and importance. The Windham

Association of ministers was especially scandalized by this insubordination and rebellion in one of their own churches, and the accompanying irregularities and disorders. Those ministers, like Mr. Mosely, who had favored and promoted the Revival, were alarmed by these unlooked for consequences, and the hostility manifested towards the church establishment and civil authority. The conduct of Elisha Paine, in presuming to preach and exhort within their own Association limits without proper ministerial ordination or permission from constituted authorities, was peculiarly offensive to this body, and in August, 1744, he was ordered to appear before it at Ashford, "to give us an opportunity to discourse with him and satisfy ourselves what measures we ought to take in respect of his conduct." Mr. Paine not appearing, and his imprisonment in September increasing the tumults and disorders, the condition of affairs was still more seriously considered at the November meeting in Scotland. A day was spent in "solemn fasting and prayer for advice and counsel in the present difficult season." The Association then seriously considered "the sad and deplorable state of the churches in several parts of the country by reason of the woful degeneracy and corruption of the experiences of Christians, and the delusions which prevail over many poor souls, to that degree as to bring them to neglect and in a great measure set aside the ordinance of preaching the Gospel, and forsake the public instituted worship of God and cast contempt upon it," and were fully satisfied, that "some of the chief apparent causes of the sins and distractions above referred to, have been the late unwarrantable attempts of Mr. Elisha Paine, Solomon Paine, Thomas Marsh and others, who have for some time past, and in divers parts of this County, gone about pretending publicly to preach the Gospel, &c., . . . having no better warrant than a persuasion of an inward call and motion of the Holy Ghost, acting upon that principle that every Christian who has, (i. e., who is persuaded that he has) an inward call is sufficiently authorized for such an undertaking." The Association declared this principle wrong and unwarrantable, and that its practice would end in Quakerism, open infidelity and the destruction of all Christian religion. Evidence was alleged to show that these exhorters and their followers "had fallen into scandalous sins and miscarriages, and even Elisha Paine, who in other things was known to be a man of the most sense of any in these parts, who might probably have done much service for God if he had obeyed I. Cor. vii: 24, had been led to great errors, miserable weakness and strange perverting of the word of God." In view of these things, it was decided to issue "a letter of advice and warning to the people to be read before their respective congregations," and a committee appointed

to prepare it. A report of the proceedings of this meeting, signed by twelve of the ministers, was published in a newspaper of the day.

Yale College was also deeply interested in the Canterbury church division. Two of its students were members of that rebellious church and implicated in the rebellion. Ebenezer Cleveland was admitted to College at the Commencement in 1744, and with his brother John spent the vacation following in Canterbury. The disturbances were then very great. The society had determined to go on and settle a minister in opposition to the wishes and protest of two-thirds of the church. The church had withdrawn from worship in the meeting-house, and was holding most violent and insurrectionary meetings in private houses, conducted by Solomon Paine and other lay members. Their brother and leader, Elisha Paine, was torn from them and thrust into prison. The greatest excitement and bitterness prevailed throughout the community. It was impossible that the young collegiates should remain passive or neutral in these stirring scenes. Their dearest earthly friends and most honored spiritual counsellors were foremost in opposing the ordination of Mr. Cogswell, contending, as they earnestly believed, for the most sacred rights and privileges of the church, and, carried away by their sympathies and the prevailing excitement, they attended with their parents and friends the irregular Sabbath services. Their attendance was reported to that stern disciplinarian, President Clap, and on their return to College in November, they were summoned before him on charge of attending unlawful or Separate meetings, which was forbidden by a law of the College. The young men admitted that during the vacation "they had heard Solomon Paine exercise his gifts, where the major part of the Canterbury church, of which they were members, met for divine worship, but did not apprehend it to be properly a Separatist meeting, since they met there by a vote to enjoy their privileges."

"*A few more than a half*," replied the Rector, 'makes no difference, since they separated upon ye same bottom (as others) of judging and censuring ministers.'

JOHN CLEVELAND: 'Whether Separates or not, we thought we had full liberty when we were from College, or out of New Haven, to go to what meeting we pleased, and it would be no transgression of College law.'

TUTOR WHITTLESY: 'How could you think so, when the Rector had been so much against it?'

JOHN C.: 'We made inquiries as to whether there was any College law forbidding it, and were told that Rev. Eb. Williams of Pomfret, one of the Trustees, said that such a law had been prepared but not passed.'

RECTOR: 'The laws of God and of the College are one.'

JOHN C.: 'I do not hold that meeting to have been separate, but in case it was, am entirely ignorant of any College law forbidding my attendance upon it.'

TUTOR W.: 'You knew it was contrary to ye Rector's mind.'

RECTOR: 'Well, but how came you to hear the Paines preach? They hold errors. Did not you know it?'

JOHN C.: 'No. We saw none.'



RECTOR: 'He holds that an unconverted person ought not to pray;' also, 'That any believer is as much united to Christ as He is to God.'

EBENEZER C.: 'What does our Saviour mean when he prays "That they may be one in Us?"'

RECTOR: 'What do you mean by it?'

TUTOR: 'Neither he nor Paine knows.'

John was about to reply, but was dismissed by the President, "but soon to be called again, as it was a weighty matter." Instead thereof, he heard that very night, that a bill of suspension had been already issued. Not expecting such summary treatment, he hastened to Tutor Whittelsy to beg for delay, supposing it possible that satisfaction might be made and the difficulty settled without publishing it, but received no favor from the obdurate Tutor, who declared that the offence was "public in its own nature, and ought to be made public here before it should be made up, and that ignorance of the law transgressed was no plea." The "bill" was read in the Hall next day before the Faculty and students, by which "John and Ebenezer Cleveland, having violated the laws of God, the Colony, and the College, by going to a Separate meeting," were "suspended from all their rights and privileges in College till satisfaction be made," and should none be made they might expect expulsion. The satisfaction demanded was a public confession in the Hall, "that they had violated the laws of God, of the Colony and of the College." This confession the young men could not in conscience make. They had not supposed that the College law referred to was binding upon them in vacation; they did not believe the meetings in Canterbury were Separate in the sense of the Colony law, and still less could they see any *Divine law* that they had broken. To be debarred from College privileges and threatened with expulsion on such a charge was a very serious and heavy trial, and was thus set forth in a petition:—

"To the Rev'd and Hon'd Rector and Tutors of Yale College in New Haven.  
Rev'd and Hon'd:—

It hath been a very great concern and trouble to me, that my conduct in the late vacancy has been such as not to maintain interest in your favor, and still retain the great privileges that I have enjoyed for three years past under your learned, wise, and faithful instruction and government. Nothing of an outward nature can equally affect me with that of being henceforward wholly secluded from the same.

Hon'd Fathers, suffer me to lie at your feet, and entreat your compassionate forgiveness to an offending child wherein I have transgressed.

Venerable Sirs: I entreat you, for your paternal wisdom and clemency, to make in my case such kind allowance for the want of that penetration and solid judgment expected in ripper heads—as tender parents are naturally disposed in respect of their weak children. But more especially I beg to be admitted in the humblest manner to suggest as a motive of your compassion to the ignorant—that I did not know it was a transgression of either the Laws of God, this Colony, or the College, for me as a member, and in covenant with a particular church, as is generally owned to be a church of Jesus Christ, to meet together with a major part of said church for social worship. And, therefore, do beg and entreat that my ignorance may be suffered to apologize. For in respect to that fact, which to ripper heads may appear to be a real

transgression, I can assure you, Venerable Sirs, that I have endeavored to keep and observe all the known laws and customs of College unblamably. And I hope I shall for the future be enabled so to do, if I may be restored to a standing again in my class. Thus begging your compassion, I subscribe your humble servant and obedient pupil,

JOHN CLEVELAND.

*New Haven, Nov. 26, 1744."*

The Rector and Tutor regarded this plea as good for nothing, because it cast no censure on the Separatist meetings or on the person, who possessing neither an academic degree, nor a ministerial license, yet presumed to conduct them. Many sharp debates were held between these officials and the offenders, the latter maintaining their position with no little spirit and ingenuity, but as they still declined to make the required confession, a formal admonition was next administered. Having stated the fact that John and Ebenezer Cleveland had attended upon a private, Separate meeting in a private house, for divine worship, in Canterbury, carried on principally by one Solomon Paine, a lay exhorter, and also the facts stated by them in justification—the Rector and Tutors considered:—

1. That by the unanimous judgment of the Association in the County of Windham, Mr. Cogswell was sufficiently qualified to be a minister of the Gospel.

2. That if there were any reasons why the said Separatists should not choose Mr. Cogswell as their minister, or if inexpedient to ordain him when so great a number were against him, it would be no justification of their setting up a separation in the mean time.

3. That neither the major part of the members in full communion, nor any other person in any parish or society, have any right or warrant to appoint any house or place of worship on the Sabbath, distinct and separate from, and in opposition to the *meeting-house*, the public place appointed by the General Assembly and the Parish, but on the contrary, all such places and separate meetings are prohibited by the ancient law of this Government.

4. The principal reasons assigned for this separation manifestly import that spirit of uncharitable censuring and rash judging of men's hearts and spiritual state, which has so much of late prevailed in the country, and which is plainly prohibited in the word of God.

5. That nothing is more plainly enjoined in the Gospel, than charity, peace and unity among Christians, and scarce anything more frequently forbidden than divisions, schisms and separations, and therefore nothing can justify a division or separation, but some plain and express direction in the word of God—and they saw no direction or warrant therein to set up a separation upon the reasons thus assigned.

6. But if it could be supposed that they had a warrant to separate from the meeting-house, Preacher and Congregation where they belonged, and attend upon some lawful minister in another place—yet this could not justify them in attending upon the ministry or preaching of a *lay Exhorter*, who has no right, license or authority to preach, and particularly of one who is a common promoter of separation and disturber of the Christian peace, not only in Canterbury, but also in Windham, Mansfield and other places.

7. That this practice of setting up lay Exhorters is without any Scripture warrant, and is subversive of the standing order of a Learned Gospel ministry, and naturally tends to introduce spiritual pride, enthusiasm, and all manner of disorders into the Christian Church.

Whereupon it was considered and adjudged by Rector and Tutors, "that the said John and Ebenezer Cleveland, in withdrawing and separating from the public worship of God, and attending upon the preaching of a lay exhorter as aforesaid, have acted contrary to the rules of the Gospel, the laws of the Colony, and of the College, and that the said Clevelands shall be publicly

admonished for their faults aforesaid, and if they shall continue to justify themselves, and refuse to make acknowledgment, they shall be expelled."

Another space was given to the young men for consideration and reflection, and so many arguments adduced to convince them of their errors as to bring them "to such a doubt and stand in their own minds, that it seemed probable they would have made some acknowledgment if they had not been prevented by evil advice." Their collision with the College authorities was very widely published, and excited great sympathy. Even friends of the College and church establishment thought the Government unreasonably severe in exacting this public confession, involving as it did the censure of their nearest family connections, while the leaders of the Revival party were earnest in commending their course and encouraging them in resistance. Most urgent letters were sent them by their mother and other friends in Canterbury, entreating them to be true to their own convictions and principles, and not to deny their church and wrong God and their own consciences by making a false confession.

Meanwhile, the troubles at home were rapidly culminating. Mr. Cogswell having accepted the terms offered by the society, it was needful to secure the co-operation of the church before his ordination could be effected. The majority refusing to act in that affair, the minority must assume the power. A church meeting was held, November 27, 1744, in the meeting-house, attended by all parties. Deacon Backus acted as moderator. After prayer, Colonel Dyer arose and declared, "That he looked upon the constitution of this church to be according to the established regulation of this Government, and if the brethren would act according thereto, and if those might be excluded from acting who were admitted since we were destitute of a pastor, we should be free to act together." As was expected, the majority of the church members present declined to accede to either proposition. Colonel Dyer then desired all the brethren who looked upon themselves to be under Saybrook Regulations, "to move to the east side of the meeting-house, whereupon they did to the number of sixteen," and there organized a distinct meeting, choosing Deacon Deliverance Brown moderator and scribe. They then voted to adjourn to the house of Captain Fitch, and there, by a unanimous vote, "chose Mr. James Cogswell for their pastor." Captain Gideon Cobb and Edward Raynsford were appointed, "to lay y<sup>e</sup> circumstances of this church before y<sup>e</sup> Association, and take their advice," and Stephen Frost and Deliverance Brown, "to go to Captain Johnson and inquire after y<sup>e</sup> book of records, and desire him to deliver it."

The Association advising "to proceed to ordination," now that the "call" had been properly given and accepted—the society, on December

5, proceeded to make arrangements, appointing a committee to send for ministers and messengers, whereupon the majority of the church sent this final protest:—

“These are to let you know that the way you proceed in with Mr. James Cogswell in order to settle him as your minister, contrary to the minds and votes of the church of Christ in this society, is contrary to the word and authority of Christ, and is not warranted by the law of this Colony. We do therefore declare to you in love and in faithfulness to the cause of Christ, that we look upon it to be our duty not to contribute anything towards his support or settlement, and that those sixteen brethren that withdrew from ye church, ye 27th day of November last, and chose Captain Brown scribe, and chose Mr. James Cogswell their minister, are not the church in this society by the law of God or man. We do, therefore, in the name and behalf of all those persons that have set their names to a paper, dated Oct. 29, 1744 . . . warn you against such unscriptural, illegal and unprecedented proceedings, and shall contribute nothing willingly. Neither can we be compelled by any law of God or man already made, to do anything as above said. So we subscribe for ourselves and in behalf of our friends above expressed, heartily desiring you may have your eyes opened to see your mistake before it be too late.

TIMOTHY BACKUS, Deacon.

ELISHA PAINE.

JOSIAH CLEVELAND.

WILLIAM BRADFORD.”

In spite of protest, injunction and threat, in the name of church or society, the minority, now calling itself the church of Canterbury, proceeded with the ordination of their candidate. They believed the need of a settled minister in town to be imperative, and that by no other means could peace and harmony be restored. In compliance with their summons, the Windham County Consociation met December 26, 1744, as an ordaining council. Fourteen ministers, with a messenger from each church, were present. The occasion was felt to be one of great and unusual interest, involving the discussion of several important questions, not fully understood. The relation of the local churches to the Ecclesiastic Establishment of the Colony, and the reciprocal relations and rights of churches and societies, majorities and minorities, were to be considered and determined. The simple question whether Mr. James Cogswell was a fit person for the position was of very little moment. The real point at issue was, Is the *majority* opposing him *the Church of Canterbury*? Colonel Dyer, Deacon Deliverance Brown and Mr. Edward Raynsford, committee of that part of the church who adhered to Saybrook Regulation, appeared before the Council, declaring, “That they who looked upon themselves the standing church in Canterbury in concurrence with the society, had called Mr. James Cogswell to the work of the ministry in this society,” and entreated them to set him apart to this work and office by ordination. Elisha and Solomon Paine and Obadiah Johnson, as representatives of the majority of the church, next appeared, declaring “that they never did, nor do they yet choose Mr. James Cogswell for their



pastor," and protested *against* his ordination on the following grounds:—

1. That this church had never by vote adopted Saybrook Platform, but at first "simply covenanted with God and one another, to use all their powers to maintain religion in the power and spirituality thereof, by which they always considered themselves Congregational, though not strictly upon the regulations of any human composure;" that when their second pastor, Mr. Jenison, was called, they made him sign with them an explicit act, that they were under Congregational and not Saybrook discipline; that they would only consent to Mr. Wadsworth's settlement upon his declaration, "That he considered the Cambridge platform most agreeable to the institutions of Christ of any human composure;" that in Jan., 1743, after fourteen months' deliberation, it was declared by a unanimous vote in full church meeting, "That the platform of church discipline agreed upon by ye synod at Cambridge, 1648 . . . was most agreeable to ye former and designed practice of this church;" that no separation had been made in their acts since that vote till November 27, 1744, "when sixteen members withdrew from the rest and voted Mr. James Cogswell their pastor; that those sixteen brethren who actually voted with the church in accepting Cambridge Platform and now acted separately from them, were necessarily *separators* and guilty of schism and of casting contempt on Christ's institutions and authority in the church," and that thus their pretended call to Mr. Cogswell to become pastor of the Canterbury church and society was wholly illegal and unvalid.

2. That the church had declared by vote and made known to the society, their minds respecting Mr. Cogswell's personal qualifications for the ministry and declined to receive him as their pastor, that they deemed it not only their privilege but their indispensable duty to select for a minister a man after God's own heart, and that as Mr. Cogswell "did not appear to them to preach the Gospel in the life, truth and power of the Spirit of God, they therefore forbid all persons and churches to ordain him over this church as their pastor."

These allegations were supported by the testimony of various church members and the church records. In opposition to them it was shown, that though the church had never formally adopted Saybrook Platform, "it had acted in conformity to it from time to time;" that Mr. Estabrook, their first pastor, was a member of the Windham County Association; that the church had at various times applied to the Association and had sent delegates to meetings of Consociation, and that neither the agreement with Mr. Jenison, nor the declaration from Mr. Wadsworth, had been inscribed in the church records.

The Council, after fully considering the charges and replies, and the ancient practice and usage of the church, was clearly of opinion, "That the church of Canterbury had by their usage and practice heretofore, (whatever their private sentiments were), declared themselves a church under Saybrook Platform . . . That according to the law of the Colony and the usages of the churches, all the churches of Connecticut Government were supposed and understood to be under Saybrook Regulation until they manifested their sober dissent from it, which it apprehended must needs be done or appear by their vote, or covenant and agreement, made as such a body and in such church capacity, which was not done by this church till January 27, 1743;"

that those who on that day voted themselves Congregational according to Cambridge Platform, are to be esteemed by that explicit act *to have denominated themselves another church, and separated themselves from those who adhered to Saybrook Regulation*; that this vote could bind none but themselves and those who adhered to it, and that, therefore, those who on November 27, 1744, called Mr. James Cogswell for their pastor as the church remaining and abiding by Saybrook Regulation, were declared to be and should thenceforward be esteemed—*The Church of Canterbury*.

The absolute supremacy of the form of church discipline established by the Government of Connecticut, was affirmed in this remarkable decision. Every church in the Commonwealth was assumed to be subject to Saybrook Platform except by formal dissent at the time of its organization, and no subsequent vote or protest by any number of its members, could change its status. The Canterbury Church, by declaring itself "Congregational according to Cambridge Platform," had forfeited its ecclesiastical standing and legal privileges. As the vote was unanimous and not a member for a time adhered to Saybrook Regulation, the original church, according to this decision, was virtually abrogated, but after a lapse of twenty-two months was restored by a touch of this magic Platform. Sixteen brethren, who had once voted for Cambridge Platform, now manifested their determination to adhere to Saybrook, and were pronounced by the Council, the Church of Canterbury and vested with all its rights and privileges.

This decision involved the settlement of all other points at issue. No need to debate the reciprocal rights of church and society, when the body hitherto acting as church had no legal right in the premises. Objections to the proposed pastor had no weight whatever, when raised by opponents outside the church and having no voice in the proceedings. The gifts and qualifications of Mr. Cogswell were deemed abundantly satisfactory, yet, lest there should be any legal flaw in their proceedings, the Council resolved to ordain him as minister only "to the society and Christian people who had called him and should willingly put themselves under his ministerial care, and not pretend to force or impose him upon the Congregational or dissenting brethren of the place, who had a right to judge or choose for themselves as to a minister, but had no right to asperse or reproach any man." By its advice the society held a meeting and formally voted, "That those in this society who are differently minded from us and can't conscientiously join in ye settlement of Mr. James Cogswell as our minister may have free liberty to enjoy their own opinions, and we are willing they should be released and discharged from paying anything to ye support of Mr. Cogswell, or living under his ministry any longer than

until they have parish privileges granted to them and are settled in church by themselves according to the order of ye Gospel, or are otherwise lawfully released."

Having thus satisfactorily solved the several knotty problems intrusted to it, and provided for the future well-being of "the dissenting brethren," the Council proceeded—December 28—to ordain Mr. Cogswell as pastor. The Rev. Eleazer Wheelock offered prayer; Mr. Solomon Williams preached; Mr. Dorrance offered the ordaining prayer; Mr. Ebenezer Williams gave the charge to the pastor; Mr. Marston Cabot, the right hand of fellowship. The long church controversy had resulted in the complete triumph of the anti-Revivalists. The minority was recognized as the stated church within Canterbury society, to whom pertained the minister and the meeting-house and all the legal provisions for the support of religious institutions. This result was approved by the highest civil and ecclesiastic authorities of Connecticut, and the decision of the Council accepted as a just and legal exposition of the power of its religious Constitution. That a majority had been set aside was of no consequence. It was a question of status and not of numbers. As President Clap had said—"a few more than half made no difference." The defeated majority, as might be expected, wholly refused to accept this interpretation. They maintained the *positive* side of the question; that no church could be lawfully under Saybrook Platform without a formal acceptance of it by vote, or covenant, and that the inclusion of their ministers in Windham Association and their own unguarded recognition of Consociation, had no significance or force in the absence of such vote or affirmation. They insisted that the sixteen brethren who had adopted the Saybrook Regulations were seceders and separates, that they alone still "maintained religion in the power and spirituality thereof" according to their covenant, and thus alone represented the true and original church of Canterbury, and spurned the proposition to re-organize as a distinct church that thus they might be released from paying for the support of Mr. Cogswell. To claim society privileges was equally repugnant. Whether these could be procured was extremely doubtful. By the law of 1743, those called Presbyterians or Congregationalists were expressly exempted from the indulgence shown to other Dissenters. Knowing this fact, the Council which had deprived them of church standing, kindly offered to aid them in applying to the Assembly for distinct society privileges, but their services were not called into requisition. The church majority in Canterbury, after so stoutly battling for the rights of the church, could not be recreant to their principles. Their early dislike of the ecclesiastic system of Connecticut was aggravated into extreme hostility. The whole parish system,

with its arbitrary assessments and penalties, was pronounced an iniquitous assumption of the power given by Christ to his church, and no consideration of personal benefit could induce them to submit to its restrictions. The rejected church members, still holding fast the church records and calling themselves the true church, were thus left without legal existence or privilege, without house or liberty of worship, or power to settle a minister, but still subject to all the laws of the society in which they were included.

The Cleveland brothers, who had given such offence to the Faculty of Yale College, by their attendance and sympathy with the Canterbury church, now, like their mother church, received sentence of deposition. Their personal interests, their strong desire to fit themselves thoroughly for the work of the ministry urged them to remain in College, but after much reflection and discussion they found it impossible to make the required confession. Under these circumstances, President Clap, who believed that to educate persons whose principles and practices were directly subversive of the visible church of Christ would be contrary to the original design of the College, that it would be a contradiction of the civil government to support a college to educate students to trample upon its own laws, and that it made no difference whether the laws of God and the civil government were broken, in or out of New Haven, with or without the concurrence of parents—felt constrained to pass the final sentence. The young men were once more summoned to the Hall, and for attending separate worship upon the Sabbath and refusing to make confession therefor, formally expelled from College, and commanded to depart the Hall and College limits, no more to return. “Likewise, the scholars were forbidden receiving them to their rooms, or conversing with them, lest they be infected thereby.”

## VI.

REVIVAL IN PLAINFIELD. RECOVERY OF MERCY WHEELER.  
DISTURBANCES IN ASHFORD. REVIVAL IN CANADA  
PARISH. SEPARATE CHURCH OF MANSFIELD.

**L**ITTLE is known of the early Revival movement in Plainfield. It was visited by Mr. Wheelock on his tour to Providence in 1741. The young college graduates, laboring in Canterbury and vicinity in the spring of 1742, also “preached in Plainfield,” and it is believed that a large number professed conversion and united with the church. A remarkable recovery from sickness in answer to prayer had probably much influence in developing and strengthening the religious



interest in this town. The subject of this cure was Mercy, daughter of Isaac Wheeler, one of the oldest and most respected citizens of Plainfield. As a child she was remarkable for health and agility, till in her twentieth year she was stricken with a burning ague, followed by nervous fever, and fell into such weakness as was almost beyond example. Unable to move head, hand, or foot, the power of speech and sight gone, flesh almost wholly consumed, taking often but one spoonful of thin liquid food a day, heart not perceived to beat—she lay through the summer, panting as if dying, every day expected to be her last. No care or cost was spared. Physicians far and near, at great expense, were consulted, and by the use of the cold bath and some other remedies, she was in some degree revived, but lay for several years speechless and helpless, unable to take bread or meat, and with but little manifestation of vital action. Her mind during this period remained clear and unimpaired, and was greatly wrought upon by spiritual impressions. Religious services were held by her bed-side, conducted by Mr. Coit and neighboring pastors, and several sermons preached in her hearing, “which were all sanctified to her for her saving good.” Her thoughts ran much on liberty of speech, with great desire to declare what had been wrought in her, particularly to the young friends with whom she had formerly associated, and on the public annual Fast-day, after earnest prayer for some special manifestation of light and love, the power of speech was very suddenly and surprisingly restored to her, so that for the first time in six years she spake out audibly, exclaiming, “What has God done for me, now !” This power continued some forty-eight hours, during which time she was able to dictate to Deacon Stearns “An Address to Young People, or Warning to them from one among them, that may be called a Warning from the Dead”—a plain, simple exhortation to repentance and Christian living, remarkable only for humility and fervency. After two years’ silence, “her mouth was again opened in praise of God, when, with surprising force and freedom, she related her religious experience.” From this time there was a gradual improvement in her physical condition, sight and speech were partially restored, and she was able to sit up in bed and feed herself, but seemed to have entirely lost the use of the lower part of her body ; her ankle-bones had become “loose and separate, so that a string was needful to keep her feet in proper position,” nor could she raise her feet or take a single step. All remedies that were tried proved ineffectual, and physicians gave no hope of recovery from this helpless condition.

During these many wearisome nights and years of weakness and suffering, Mercy experienced great quietness of soul and submission to the Divine will, but the decay of vital godliness and prevalence of error

and iniquity weighed heavily upon her, and with the deepest joy and thankfulness she welcomed the Great Awakening. Religious fasts and lectures were attended in her sick-room, in which she joyfully participated. Her inability to aid much in this great work gave her, however, an unusually painful sense of her infirmities, and especially so when anticipating a religious service to be held by Mr. Lord of Preston. But while greatly exercised with pain in her disordered joints and weakness in her vital parts, "the Lord appeared to her in his Word, setting home several passages of Scripture with such power to her soul—especially John ii: 40—"Said I not unto thee, that if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God"—that she could not help thinking that God would, some way or other, glorify himself in her further remarkable deliverance." Such wonderful works were wrought in all parts of the land, that it seemed nothing more difficult for God to heal her. "Meditating on the healing of the impotent man who had lain so long, her soul was much let out in seeking to the Lord Jesus to heal *her*, and though her pains were very great and many temptations and discouragements suggested to her mind, she staggered not, but entered the day of the meeting strong in faith, believing that she should see the glory of God, but keeping all her thoughts and expectations to herself."

A large number of persons gathered at Mr. Wheeler's on the appointed afternoon, May 25, 1743. Mr. Lord began the service with prayer, "but to her raised thoughts he was not so earnest for her healing as he used to be, but the sermon, though *trying* and keeping her much employed in self-examination, tended to strengthen her." After he had given some description of the humble heart, he proceeded to examine those which are thus humbled, saying: "The Lord will revive the hearts of the humble, and if you are truly humble, God will revive you. Yes, if for his glory, he will revive and bring you out of a furnace." Mercy then "fell a-trembling, but without diffidence or terror, for it was given her to believe that the Lord would revive, and help, and bring her out: her mind in a raised frame, but more and more confirmed in it, that the Lord would show his glory by helping her." After the close of the service, the ministers present said a few words to her, but she was too spent and overcome for ordinary conversation, but could not help talking about her healing and that she saw Christ was willing to heal her. Mr. Lord replied, "That she should have the will of God concerning her"—but by this time she was so overpowered with the sense of God that she could hardly speak, and seemed like an atom drowned in the sea, so swallowed up was she with the thought, and sense of God, and every-way surrounded with his power. She only observed to Mr. Lord,

"That it seemed to her, God was with her of a truth." He replied, "If so, then you *are* well—and I will leave you for the present," which he thought best because she was so spent. No sooner was he gone than it turned in her mind—"the lecture is ended and the service all over and I am not healed. What is become of my faith now? Won't it be with me as it used to be?" Whereupon a cloud of great darkness came over her, in which she was led to see what a poor unworthy creature she was, with a disposition to be what God would have her. Then the words came to her with new power, "If thou wilt believe thou shalt see the glory of God *now*," by which the darkness was carried off, and under the influence of this word now—she seemed to be wholly taken out of herself into the hands of God, and enabled to believe that he *could* and *would* heal her. At that instant she felt a thrill, a strange irresistible motion and shaking, which began first with her hands and quickly spread over her whole frame; a weight, a racking, a working in every joint, as if she were with hands drawn and compressed together. And as this trembling passed off, her pains went with it; strength came to her vitals and thence diffused itself all over her animal frame into her hips, knees and ankles; she felt strong and well as if she had no disease upon her. With this sensation of new strength and freedom, she felt that she was rising up, that she must arise, and to the utter amazement of the assembled people, who had known nothing of what was passing within her—the bed-ridden woman, who for sixteen years had not stood upon her feet, *rose up and walked* with evident vigor and sprightliness across the room, crying out, "Bless the Lord Jesus, who has healed me!" For a moment, all thought she was out of her senses. Mr. Lord, taking hold of her, "led her back to the bed, yea, even thrust her down upon it, observing that she was in a frenzy." But she, feeling yet more strong and free and assured of her recovery, could not be confined there, but quickly rose up again and "with the high praises of God in her mouth; her soul filled with such admiration and love as was inexpressible," walked several times to and fro across the room with strength and steadiness—so that all the people were constrained to think and say, "Verily, this is the power of God! And they wondered and praised the same." "And it was about six in the afternoon that this thing was done, at which they all marvelled, and having united in prayer and in praise on this remarkable occasion, they were dismissed to their several homes with wondering and rejoicing at what their eyes had seen and their ears heard."

The cure so suddenly effected was permanent. The diseased ankle-bones, before so parted that one "could lay the ball of his thumb between them," were now closed and firm—"an evidence of sight as well as sense." The poor feet that had so long "turned every way"

with no power to control them, could now "be used to admiration." From the happy hour of her deliverance, Mercy Wheeler "walked, praising God." The following day, she walked to her brother's house. On Sunday, she rode on horseback three miles to the house of God and thenceforward was able to attend public worship and engage in all the ordinary affairs of life. This remarkable manifestation of Christian faith and Divine power deeply impressed the community. Deception or self-illusion in this case was out of the question. Hundreds of persons had seen Mercy in her weak and crippled condition, and now testified to the suddenness and thoroughness of her cure. The wonderful story spread through all the surrounding towns and was blessed to the awakening and strengthening of many. Special religious services were held in Plainfield. Mr. Hezekiah Lord of Preston "preached a public lecture," June 1, taking for his theme the healing of the lame man, recorded Acts iii: 6-10. A public thanksgiving service was held in Plainfield meeting-house, June 14, attended by a great concourse of people, when the Rev. Benjamin Lord of Norwich preached from Matt. xv: 28. The sermon was intended "to open the right method of seeking mercy from the Lord," and thus refers to Mercy Wheeler in the closing sentence:—

"Let us with the subject of a late marvellous deliverance before our eyes—a pleasing spectacle to angels and men, because a signal monument of the mercy and power of God, our Heavenly Father—let all this great number and all people that hear of this remarkable cure, wonder and glorify the Lord of Israel our Saviour."

This discourse was shortly published by Mr. Lord, together with a detailed report of all the circumstances of the case and affidavits from those who had known Mercy before and after the cure, and excited much attention and interest. So rapid was its sale that a second edition was soon issued. The story of Mercy Wheeler was even carried across the water, and Christian friends in England accepted it with much satisfaction. The notoriety thus gained and the attention lavished upon her had no effect upon the simple and humble-minded Mercy, who quietly devoted herself to the usual routine of domestic duties—"a living example of meekness, patience, love, faith, fortitude and unshaken constancy in religion, and a great blessing to all those about her."

The revival in Plainfield, as in Canterbury, was followed by church division; but little can be learned of the progress or extent of the secession movement. A minority in the church became uneasy at the practice of admitting members without an account of faith and repentance, and baptizing children when the parents were not church members. Mr. Coit was old and cautious, unwilling to make alterations or concessions. The uneasy church members, after taking some



pains for that end, were unable to effect any alteration or reform and at length withdrew from the standing church and organized as a church according to Cambridge Platform. Thomas Stevens, father and son, James Marsh and Joseph Spalding were active in this movement, which was accomplished in 1746. A very pleasing feature of the revival in Plainfield was its effect upon the remaining Aborigines. These docile and tractable Quinebaugs were greatly impressed by the vivid presentation of religious truths, and according to a cotemporary, there was wrought among them "the most evident reformation that hath appeared amongst any people whatever in these latter times, for they are not only filled with knowledge of ye way of salvation, and express the same to admiration, but are so reformed in their ways of living as to abstain from drinking to excess, which it was utterly impossible to bring them to any other way, and have their religious meetings and sacrament administered to them by ministers of their own nation."

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The revival in Ashford was accompanied by much controversy and confusion. The church was previously divided in sentiment, some sharing the moderate views of their pastor; others rigidly Calvinistic, terrified at the least appearance of heterodoxy. It does not appear that either party was in sympathy with the revival, or that the church received any unusual accession during this period. Solomon Paine and other itinerants extended their labors to this field, and many of their hearers embraced Separate or New Light principles. These Separates were divided upon the question of baptism, and thus four opposing factions existed in Ashford. The Baptists increased so rapidly in numbers that, in the summer of 1743, they were organized as a distinct church—the first Baptist church formed in Windham County. Thomas Denison, a member of Mr. Jewett's church in New London, a recent convert to Baptist principles "much carried away by the stir," was called to become its pastor. Accepting this call, he was ordained in November, "by the laying on of hands of Elder Moulton of Brimfield," who had been himself ordained by Elder John Callendar of Newport, and other noted Baptist fathers. The church thus organized had but a brief existence. Mr. Denison was a man of weak, unstable character and soon declared himself mistaken, renounced his Baptist principles, and relapsed into Pedit-baptism and a rambling itineracy, and his church, deserted and disheartened, quickly fell to pieces.

The proceedings of these Baptists and Separates were very offensive to the rigid church party of Ashford, and attempts were made to

obstruct and prevent their meetings. The preaching of Solomon Paine was especially obnoxious. February 15, 1745, information was brought to Justice Tiffany, that Paine was actually preaching in a private house to a considerable number of men and women—"standing with a Bible in his hand, . . . in order to break the peace that was likely to be attained by the church." Tiffany searched his law-book, and finding clearly, "that it was an unlawful meeting for Paine to come to Ashford to preach and exhort," thereupon granted a warrant. Armed with this instrument, Constable Bemis repaired to the house specified, and taking hold of Paine, told him that he had no right to preach, and that he must go before the Justice to answer for his preaching, contrary to law. Paine, with his usual vehemence, replied, "That the law made for restraining such preaching and exhorting was made by the Devil in the lowest pit of Hell, and that he would be burnt to ashes before he would obey the Devil or any of his crew." Bemis then called upon several persons by name to assist him, who at first refused, but when told they must obey the constable or suffer the penalty, "gently took Paine from the stage whereon he was preaching, and carried him out of the door and set him down." Paine still refusing to go, "they took him in a very gentle way and set him on a horse and led him to Justice Tiffany's," where he was properly rebuked and apparently dismissed. In return for this forbearance, constable, grand-juror and all who had assisted them, were themselves indicted for being guilty of a riot, in "that with riotous intent and with force and arms they did assault the person of said Solomon Paine, and pulled him onto the floor and carried him half a mile distant, to his great hurt and abuse and the disturbance of others." The plaintiffs, upon trial before the County Court, were declared not guilty, but adjudged to pay costs of prosecution. A humble petition to the General Assembly, set forth the trials and indignities these officials had suffered in attempting to execute the wholesome laws of the Colony, "and the vile and insufferable reproach cast upon the worthy Legislators and civil rulers of the Colony by one Solomon Paine, when apprehended by a constable for presuming to preach and exhort an assembly of people at a private house in the name of Jesus Christ, contrary to the laws of Jesus Christ, . . . expressions which they deemed *Treason* against the Government, not to be connived at by any of his Majesty's legal subjects." This affecting representation of their sufferings and loyalty procured the remission of the "bill of costs" assigned them.

No attempt was apparently made to organize a Separate church in Ashford, the dissenting brethren uniting with churches in neighboring towns. The Baptists, after some years of weakness and struggles, were incorporated into the church of Brimfield. A majority in this church

was opposed to what were called Revival principles, but after a long controversy, the minority "told their experiences to each other's satisfaction, signed new articles and a covenant, April 2, 1747, and would not allow any others to commune with them without coming in at this door"—especially covenanting:—

"That we will keep the door of God's church open always to believers in Christ, and as God shall assist us, we will always keep the doors shut against unbelievers and profligate persons."

Elder Moulton, the pastor, signed these articles, and was probably active in promoting this "new departure." The majority complained of the proceedings as unreasonable, but acted nothing as a body against them. The Ashford Baptists united with this reformed church, and continued for many years steadfast in its fellowship.

The churches of Windham were much affected by the Revival, receiving large accessions in its earlier stages, and suffering much from subsequent secession. Mr. Mosely of Canada Parish was very active in promoting the work, laboring with great earnestness at home and abroad, and receiving no less than one hundred and twenty-five persons into full communion with his church. At this time he was opposed to the authority of Consociation, and declared to the brethren that their church was not under Saybrook Platform, and that God had led' them to that vote in which they had taken the Scriptures for their only rule. He was in full sympathy with Wheelock and Pomeroy, and joined with them in testifying to the doctrinal soundness of Elisha Paine. The excesses and disorders of the extreme Revivalists, and some insubordination among his own church members soon afterwards, greatly alarmed him, and being a person of very strong and positive convictions, he became one of their most active and prominent opposers—according to Backus—"overpowered by the enemy so as to turn and act against Paine in the great cause of Reformation." The secession in this church, as was usually the case, was much less than where the pastor at first opposed the Revival, the new converts being fostered and encouraged by the church and adding much to its strength and vitality. Its excellent deacon, Thomas Marsh, who for more than twenty years had served the Lord's table, John Hovey and some other prominent members were, however, unable to remain in fellowship with the church, and united with the Separate church of Mansfield.

This Mansfield Church movement was initiated by some of the most prominent Revivalists of Windham, Mansfield and vicinity, who felt constrained to come out and separate themselves formally from the several established churches with which they were connected, and

form a new organization according to their own peculiar principles. No formal enunciation of doctrine and practice had yet been made by them. The Canterbury church, though now a distinct body, still retained its original covenant. The Mansfield church covenant was therefore very carefully framed by the Separate leaders, and may be considered as their deliberate official declaration of faith and practice. It contained twenty-two articles, the last of which, relating to the church, included fourteen specifications. In all the great fundamental doctrines of religion they agreed mainly with other orthodox, evangelical churches, but insisted upon a more direct and personal application of them. The churches of the land had become corrupted by the admission of unregenerate members. Christ demanded a pure church. To secure this end, none were to be allowed to enter this church but such as were *certainly known* to be regenerate; such as could confidently say, "We believe we are of that number who were elected of God to eternal life, and that Christ did live on earth, die and rise again for us in particular, . . . which God hath made us to believe by sending, according to his promise, the Holy Ghost into our souls, who hath made particular application of the above articles." They declared, "That all doubting in a believer is sinful;" "That true believers, by virtue of their union to Christ in faith, have communion with God, and by the same faith are in Christ united to one another," and that thus "saints could certainly know one another and know who are Christ's true ministers by their own inward feelings, or a communion between them in the inward actings of their own souls." They also declared, "That whoever presumes to administer or partake of the seals of the covenant of grace without saving faith, are guilty of sacrilege and are in danger of sealing their own damnation;" "That true believers and they only, have a right to give up their children to God in baptism;" "That at all times the doors of the church should be carefully kept against such as cannot give a satisfying evidence of the work of God upon their souls, whereby they are united to Christ." For true believers, known and consecrated, and visibly united together, they claimed the power "to choose and ordain such officers as Christ has appointed in his church, such as bishops, elders and deacons; and by the same power to depose such officers as evidently appear to walk contrary to the Gospel or fall into any heresy"—though believing, that in such cases it was convenient to take advice of neighboring churches of the same constitution. They also believed, "that all the gifts and graces that were bestowed upon any of the members, should be improved for the good of the whole in gospel freedom; that every brother qualified by God for the same, had a right to preach according to the measure of faith; that the essential qualification for preaching



was wrought by the Spirit of God ; that the knowledge of tongues and liberal sciences was not absolutely necessary, and, though doubtless convenient and profitable if rightly used, if brought in to supply the want of the Spirit of God, would prove a snare to those that use them and all that follow them."

The above articles of faith having been duly prepared and considered, the separating brethren met in Mansfield, October 9, 1745, and having given a verbal account of their experiences to mutual satisfaction, signed the covenant and declared themselves a distinct and separate church of Christ, without any reference to the churches with which they were previously connected. It does not appear that any ordained minister assisted in this transaction. Brother Thomas Marsh of Canada Parish was elected for their teaching elder. January 6, 1746, was appointed for his ordination to that office, but on the day previous he was arrested for preaching the Gospel without lawful license or authority, and carried off to Windham jail. A great concourse of people gathered on the appointed day, not knowing what had befallen the prospective pastor, and "a suitable" and doubtless most inflammatory sermon was preached by Mr. Elisha Paine. The associated ministers of Windham County, dismayed at the failure of their admonitory letter and the actual formation of a separate church within their limits, felt it their duty to publicly testify against the projected profanation of the ceremony of ordination, and at the close of the service appeared in a body before the excited multitude—"fourteen learned ministers," attempting, according to Backus, "to scatter that flock after their shepherd was smitten." Their reception was most tumultuous. Their arguments and remonstrances were drowned "in unchristian and opprobrious revilings," and unable to gain a quiet hearing, they were forced to retreat after reading a protest against these proceedings in the name of the lawful ecclesiastic authority of Windham County. The Mansfield church proceeded to elect John Hovey, also it is believed from Canada Parish, teaching elder, and early in February succeeded in effecting his ordination. The service was performed according to their own principles by brethren of the church assisted by Thomas Denison, himself recently ordained by Rev. Ebenezer Moulton of Brimfield, and tracing back in ministerial succession "to three of the most noted Congregational ministers in Boston." Matthew Smith and Thomas Denison were then ordained ruling elders. John Austin and Shubael Dimick, deacons. Deacon Marsh meanwhile was "closely locked up" in Windham jail, while the notorious Dr. Hallowell, then confined there on a criminal charge, was allowed to visit the sick in various parts of the town. So great was the number of ecclesiastic offenders at this date, that a new story was added to the

jail and even then many were sent to Hartford. Deacon Marsh was released from imprisonment in June, and ordained soon after colleague pastor of Mansfield Separate church.

## VII.

### CANTERBURY SEPARATE CHURCH. RENEWAL OF COVENANT. PETITION TO ASSEMBLY. CALL TO PASTORS. ORDINATION OF SOLOMON PAINE.

THE first act of that body, still calling itself The Church of Canterbury, but known to others as The *Separate* Church of Canterbury, "after several of its visible members had rent themselves away and by the aid of Association and Consociation formed themselves into a body under Saybrook Regulations"—was to renew its covenant with solemn fasting, confession of sins and prayer. The position which it occupied was one of great prominence and importance, as the first church in the Colony which had formally avowed New Light principles and renounced fellowship with the established churches. Its bold and persistent advocacy of the rights of the church and the liberties of Christians had awakened the admiration and sympathy of thousands of ardent Revivalists, and the day of its deposition from church estate was celebrated as one of spiritual emancipation and exaltation. Many of these sympathizers had gathered in Canterbury "on that blessed, sweet and glorious day," to witness "the first visible flock of Christ, taking up Christ's sweet cross to follow the Lamb," and choosing "the glorious, exalted Redeemer to be its only Head." Holding this position, it behooved the Canterbury Separates to see that their church covenant was purified from all tincture of error, and clearly set forth their peculiar views and principles. A meeting for this purpose was held, January 6, 1745, when, in order to guard against those things that lead to darkness and corruption, "the covenant was writ more plain and particular," and the following expositions and declarations added:—

"1. We look upon Cambridge Platform as most agreeable to the Word of God of any human composition, and agree to hold it except Chap. x., paragraph x.; also, paragraph xi., respecting magistrate's duty—it not appearing clear to this church, that the civil power under Gospel dispensation be entrusted with the support of the Gospel (but the Church) and have power to discipline and custodize all who will not contribute to the support of the Gospel, by Holy Scriptures. Gifts may be received of, but not forced from, its enemies. Also, Chapter lxxi., not held by this church; yet we hold that Christians are bound by the laws of the place they inhabit which are of a civil nature, although made by wicked men, as much as if made by Christians—but in things of a religious nature, that respect the conscience, Christ has

given us sufficient laws and rules to regulate and govern his church, and never did accept that fear and service that were taught by precept and commandments of men but rejected it, under the law of Moses as well as under the Gospel.

2. Whereas our covenant obliges us to oppose sin and error in ourselves and others, we do understand it to mean not only such things as worldly, moral men condemn, but all such as the Word of God do, viz.: foolish talking and jesting, vain company, spending time idly at the taverns, evil whispering, carnal and unnecessary discourse about worldly things, especially on the Sabbath, unnecessary forsaking the assembling of ourselves in private convenient conferences and also on Sabbath days, and all other sins forbidden by the Word of God, both of omission and commission. And although it be not expressed in the aforesaid covenant that we actually dissented from Saybrook Regulation, yet we ever understood ourselves to have done it, and here declare with our whole hearts that we *do dissent* from the discipline set up and expressed therein—it appearing to us to be contrary to the authority of Christ set up in his Word, which we look upon as complete and none can pretend to amend or add to it without casting open contempt on Christ and his Holy Spirit. The said Saybrook Platform takes the power from the brethren of the church, and puts an absolute and decisive power in the *Consociation* contrary to Christ, and also have created an Association not warranted by Christ in his Word. These things the church looks upon to be anti-Christian, unscriptural and leading to a papal usurpation over the consciences of God's children. Also, there being no half-members in Christ, this church covenants to admit none to own the covenant that will not come to full communion, it being inconsistent with the covenant, nor will we admit any to baptism but true believers and their seed."

It was agreed, that all those whom the church should declare by their vote, that they are in charity with and who now renewed the covenant, should sign this instrument with their own hands, "which was done." Fifty-seven subscribed their names upon this occasion, and many others a few months later, representing some of the oldest and most respectable families in Canterbury, viz.: Paine, Backus, Cleveland, Adams, Johnson, Fitch, Bacon, Hyde, Bradford, Brown, Parish and Carver. Whatever the character of the Separate element in other places, in Canterbury it was respectable and influential, and under favoring circumstances might have become a permanent power in the community. But their refusal to organize as a distinct religious society had left them at the mercy of their opponents, and from the outset of their independent existence the Canterbury Separates were compelled to battle with civil authority. Early in February, a rate was levied upon them for ordination expenses and the salary of Mr. Cogswell. The church appointed Solomon Paine to represent their interests before the General Assembly. Members of the society not in full communion with any church joined "with the first and Congregational church of Christ in Canterbury," in appointing Solomon Paine agent, to present the prayer to the Assembly, "that they might be released from paying anything towards the support of Mr. James Cogswell." Thus empowered, Mr. Paine laid before the Assembly in May a detailed report of the whole Canterbury controversy; insisted that the church he represented was the "only true church in that society, inasmuch as the

other part was the minor when they separated from the major, and although the major had no right to hold the minor contrary to their conscience and judgment, yet the minor's withdrawing destroys not the major. . . . That Christ's word gave no rule to make one church out of another true church by virtue of their contrary principles, so if they *were*, the other party *could not be* the true church;" and in most earnest and forcible terms besought, "That they might be released from paying towards the support and settlement of Mr. Cogswell and the expense of his ordination; also, from paying towards repairing the meeting-house by force taken from the church. He also prayed the Honorable Assembly, as their fathers under God in all civil concerns from whom justice should ever flow, that they would bid the Canterbury society pay over to the church their proportion of the worth of the meeting-house, or order its possession delivered up to them, and grant liberty to the memorialists to improve their own estates for the settling and maintaining the Gospel ministry among themselves."

An emphatic "No," from both Houses was the only answer to this presumptuous petition. Congregationalists repudiating Saybrook Platform were exempted by law from the benefit of Acts of Toleration, and the Canterbury Separates were left to bear their double burdens, and even pay the expenses of that ordaining Council which had robbed them of their birthright. The assessments allowed them by law were rigorously enforced by the society's committee. The Separates were taxed for Mr. Cogswell's settlement, ordination and maintenance, and for repairing the meeting-house seized and held by their opponents. Refusing to pay these rates, their cattle, goods and household furniture were forcibly taken, and in default of these their bodies were cast into prison. The kindly effort of Consociation "to settle Canterbury" had only resulted in a final division of the church, and greatly increased rancor and bitterness between the contending parties.

Their many trials and difficulties did not deter the Canterbury Separates from renewed attempts to call and settle a minister. No factious minority now could oppose them in seeking "a man after God's own heart," and their own fancy. Their first choice was their beloved and honored father, Elisha Paine, but he delayed answer, "that if it was God's will they should have a learned man, there might be opportunity." For a time, "every thing seemed to look as if it were appointed they should have no other pastor," and then again it was less clear "whether it was God's will that he should take ye care of a particular church." The leadings of Providence seemed to point to a wider field. The spirit of Separation was spreading like wild-fire through the land. Thousands of New Lights were coming out from



the established churches and attempting, like those of Canterbury and Mansfield, to organize as distinct churches. These masses of ignorant Separates, unaccustomed to church or self-government, filled with irregular and undisciplined religious enthusiasm, wild, visionary and fanatical, needed some one to advise and guide them. "And where," asks Backus, "could such a leader be found?" Could any man think of looking to the barren shores of Cape Cod for his birth, to the obscure village of Canterbury for his education, or to a bench of lawyers for his integrity and faithfulness? Of all things this seemed most unlikely. Yet such was the event." Elisha Paine was the Moses to lead the resolute Separates from their "Egyptian bondage." His boldness, energy and ability, superior education, hatred of civil and ecclesiastic oppression, and above all, his fervent and devoted piety, fitted him for this leadership. Hundreds of letters came to him from all parts of the land—Connecticut, Massachusetts, even from distant New Hampshire and New Jersey—beseeching his assistance. "After solemn prayer to the Head of the church, and waiting and observing his providence," he felt constrained to accept the call, and the church voted it their opinion, "That they ought not to insist upon his settling over them in the work of the ministry."

Their next application was to their dear brother, John Cleveland, then pursuing his studies at Branford, "to labor in the work of the Gospel ministry on probation, in order to be pastor of this church"—but he, for some unassigned cause, declined to comply. Lastly, they applied to their beloved brother, Solomon Paine, already improved in the church as an exhorter, "sound in the faith and of sober life and conversation, apt to teach, and by the grace of God in some considerable degree qualified therefor, . . . capable of opening, expounding and applying God's Word, so as, by the assistance of God's Spirit, it is profitable to the hearers." Mr. Paine would promptly have obeyed the call to minister to a church so dear to him, had he not been involved in a serious inward conflict, very characteristic of the period. In searching the Scriptures for a particular command for every particular duty of a pastor, he could find no plain command, nor yet a plain precedent for the baptizing of infants, and thereupon fell into great perplexity and darkness, not daring to accept the call and go forward to organize the church, nor to state the reason of his hesitation, lest it should scatter doubt among his brethren. Believing, however, that the Lord would give him light before he said yea or nay finally, he begged time for consideration and proceeded to investigate the question, having a constant spirit of prayer and a disposition to receive light, turn out which side it would. He saw clearly by Scripture light

that God did take Abraham's infant seed into visible covenant, that the blessing of Abraham had come upon Gentile believers, and that Christ's visible Kingdom consisted of them and their children, but could see no command to *baptize* them, and was almost ready to conclude that they were in an error to hold it in their church covenant and this was to break them in pieces. In response to his earnest prayer that God would open the truth to him from his Word, a text was impressed upon his mind, so preposterous, so improper, so utterly irrelevant that he almost feared it a suggestion of the Adversary. The unhappy Solomon was in the greatest distress and perplexity; months were passing away; the church was suffering greatly for want of a pastor; "the ark of God was shaking and yet he dared not touch it." Sometimes he feared his unbelief was the Achan that caused all the trouble; yet, notwithstanding all his straits and trembling, God gave him a spirit of great quietness and submission, and confidence that he would have light in good time, but by what means it would come or on which side it would turn the scale he knew not, neither did he care. No other scriptural text was vouchsafed to him, but at length a remarkable dream revealed the symbolic character of that previously given. Light now began to dawn. He studied prayerfully the text that had seemed at first so preposterous, turned it over and over, and by a perversity of interpretation incomprehensible to the ordinary understanding, clearly deduced from it—that those who rejected that part of Abraham's faith by which his natural children were made heirs of the Promise, should not be used to build up the house of Abraham. Still the doubt remained, "Who hath required to wash their faces before their hearts are washed?" Another vision was granted him. In sleep, a child was brought to him for baptism. He felt some hesitation, but as he looked upon its face, he saw that *there* alone the image of God made any visible appearance; *there* he saw a table in which one might read that an invisible, immortal mind or soul was united to the body; *there* when the soul was under powerful impressions of the image of God appeared an awe, and when under the impressions of the Devil appeared pride and malice, so that their faces are said to shine under the first, and the show of their countenances to witness against them under the last. Then he saw that the soul of that child, although then passive as to any good impressions or motives, was yet a subject capable of being washed in the blood of Christ by the Spirit, and as an adult sinner was passive in the internal washing, and an adult believer passive in the external seal—so the infant was but *passive*. Thus meditating, he took the child in his arms and baptized it with as clear a light as ever he had performed any Christian duty, and awoke to find it a dream. He put it away as a

dream, but he could not put away the truth of the ideas. He tried to hold his scruples, but they were gone. He tried to scruple the way of getting rid of them, but in vain. Clearly and plainly was it now manifest to him that God had made the children of believers partakers in the covenant and *its seals*. Faith had gotten the victory, and with joyful heart he now firmly believed "that the Lord would organize the Canterbury church and give them to see his glory, and have fellowship one with another and with himself in *all his institutions* as explained in their covenant." Now he was ready to dedicate himself to God and the church in the pastoral work. A church meeting was called, July 7, 1746, in which Mr. Paine detailed at great length his late spiritual conflict, how he got into it, and by what light he was delivered from it, and signified his acceptance of their call. His explanation of the cause of his delay was perfectly satisfactory, and doubtless it was thought that only a second Solomon could have attained the interpretation of such dark sayings and mysteries. With joy and thankfulness the church welcomed his acceptance of the ministerial office. After suffering such trials, conflicts and persecution in attempting to procure a spiritual pastor, a man especially after their own heart had at length been granted to them.

Before the ordination of Solomon Paine, further church action was found requisite. It had been thought inexpedient to admit members on profession of faith while destitute of a pastor, and a large number was waiting for admission. Though the church covenant was "writ so plain and particular," some did not understand it because of its allusion to certain articles in the Cambridge Platform, and that every one might come to the knowledge of it without difficulty, it was thought expedient "that the sum of discipline be put into the covenant to be read in public to every one who joins and owns covenant with the church," as follows:—

"I. That supreme and lordly power over all the churches upon earth doth only belong to Christ, who is King of ye church and Head thereof. He hath the government upon his shoulders and hath all power given to him, both in Heaven and in Earth, which is exercised by him in calling the church out of the world into holy fellowship with himself, in instituting ordinances of worship and appointing ministers and officers for the dispensing of them.

II. The power granted by Christ unto the body of ye church is a prerogative or privilege which ye church doth exercise:

1. In admitting their own members.
2. In choosing and ordaining their own officers.
3. In removing them from their office and also from their fellowship.
4. In supporting and maintaining the Gospel ministry, ordinances and ye poor of ye church, without using the civil sword or any coercive way to force men thereto."

It had been previously voted:—

"That it is the duty of every member of this church, when called upon, to give a reason of his hope and of his progression in holiness to said church,

and every one refusing should be looked upon as open contemners of the Gospel commands."

August 4, 1746, it was further agreed:—

"That every visible member of this church, in order to enjoy all the privileges of regular church members, do come and solemnly declare that they do understandingly, in the presence of the great God and this church, own and renew their covenant with God and this church, and sign it."

These matters arranged, on September 10, 1746, Solomon Paine was ordained pastor of what the record calls, "the regular Congregational church of Canterbury." The services were performed by the officers of the Mansfield Separate Church. Matthew Smith, ruling-elder, preached the ordination sermon; Thomas Denison gave the charge; Thomas Marsh, the right hand of fellowship—"all done by the power and direction of Christ given to, and exercised by, this particular church," and the "whole affair attended with the demonstration of the Holy Spirit and with power." September 16, the church received a large accession to its membership, sixty-seven persons signing the perfected covenant. The communion service was now divided with the "brethren who had rent away," but the original covenant and church records were persistently held by the so-called Separates. The question of "apointing meat asesurs" was considered and rejected. In place thereof, it was voted, "That there should be four contributions in a year for the support of the minister and the relief of the poor; Also, that the ordinances of the Lord's Supper be administered once in two months." Its duty with reference to those who had gone out from them was very seriously considered by the church, and it was wisely decided by unanimous vote, January 29, 1747:—

"That we do not find by ye Word and Spirit of God, that we, as a body, are by virtue of our former nominally and externally covenanting with those that are now gone out from us, obliged to deal with them as brethren and visible members of this church."

At the same meeting they discoursed "upon what seemed to be duty in order to furnish the church with deacons," and also a meeting-house to worship in. On the latter point no action is reported. A meeting-house was built, after a time, "on the high land west of Canterbury Green," probably by private church members, without the aid of official authority. In February, "Thomas Boswell was chosen, in the unity of the Spirit, to be put into the office of deacon, and with a ready mind accepted the same and declared that he was called of God." At the same time, Obadiah Johnson accepted a renewed call to this office, "being filled with the Spirit of God." The church had fellowship with them both at this time, and also, March 25, when they were ordained "by solemn fasting and prayer and the laying on of hands in the demonstration of the Spirit and with power."

The Canterbury Separate church, when thus at length formally



organized and furnished with requisite officers was a strong and united body, comprising about one hundred and twenty members, "known to be regenerate," professing a high degree of spirituality and consecration. With some errors in doctrine and practice, and a tendency to fanaticism and extravagance, it was still a church of strong faith, ardent prayers and great spiritual vitality, and for a time increased in numbers and influence. Its pastor, if lacking in judgment, was honest and earnest. Many of its members lived devoted Christian lives, and died in the triumphs of faith. Seasons of special quickening and revival were enjoyed, when many were added to the church. At a communion service in 1748, when many "came together to break bread," after hearing in the morning a powerful and affecting discourse from their pastor, the afternoon was spent in hearing young converts "declaring their faith, which continued till in the night, and then the Lord's supper was administered and received in faith and love to the glorious, broken, bleeding Saviour, in a wonderful flame of love one to another flowing from the glorious, sweet and awful love of God to our souls; sensibly flowing to us through and in his dear Son, who was broken for our sins." The first death recorded by Solomon Paine on the church records was that of "Hannah, wife of Henry Adams, March 20, 1748, after much strong consolation in believing, hoping and longing to be swallowed up in ye love of God."

## VIII.

### TROUBLES IN MORTLAKE PARISH. SECESSION FROM THE CHURCH. DEALINGS WITH OFFENDERS. SEPARATE CHURCH IN SOUTH KILLINGLY.

THE church in Mortlake Parish, known as the second church of Pomfret, shared largely in the religious awakening, adding to its membership one hundred and six, in 1741-2. This church was more inclined to Independency and less rigid in discipline than most of its cotemporaries, and probably would have escaped defection and division but for its close affiliation with Canterbury. Among its members were Josiah, an elder brother of John and Ebenezer Cleveland, Constance, sister of Elisha and Solomon Paine, and other Canterbury residents, all in full sympathy with the Revival and eager to exercise the privilege of laboring and exhorting. John Cleveland, in his diary, May, 1742, reports several religious conferences in Mr. Avery's society, "some filled; one coming out full of joy," and "also a jangle between Mr. Avery and the brethren." These jangles were increased by the

law soon after promulgated for regulating abuses and suppressing this disorderly exhorting. After lecture, July 2, the church thus voted:—

“That the pastor should have liberty to get any other minister or preacher to preach in his parish or pulpit as he thought best, and as he has been wont to do, and his doing it should be esteemed the design of the church, unless any difficulty should be likely to arise by the preaching of any particular gentleman, and then the matter should be proposed to the church. Liberty to take effect in one year. [N. B. Vote occasioned by Colony law prohibiting any one's preaching in another minister's parish without consent.]”

The zealous Revivalists in Mr. Avery's parish were none the less inclined to hold their peace for this restriction, but continued to hold meetings and exhort both in public and private. The “jangle” soon resulted in open outbreak and rupture. On lecture-day, September 10, several brothers and sisters of the church went so far “beyond their line as to break the peace and quiet of the church” by publicly exhorting the congregation after service. Samuel Wilson actually had the temerity “to speak for some considerable time to the people on the common before the meeting-house door, attempting “to teach them the wretched estate they were in, an that their help was in God, and exhorting them to come to him.” Ezekiel Spalding also, “spoke very loud for a little space by way of exhorting the people,” and Constance Paine “was heard to speak in a very loud, earnest and resolute manner.” Great clamor and confusion followed. Some denounced the speakers, some encouraged them. Disputing and jangling were heard on every side, even within the sacred walls of the meeting-house. Tidings of the outbreak were speedily carried to Mr. Avery. Moses could say on a somewhat similar occasion, “Would God that all the Lord's people were prophets, and that the Lord would put his Spirit upon them”—but the spirit of this reply was quite unknown at the period now in question. Mr. Avery, wise and excellent man that he was, could brook no unlawful intrusions upon his own province, and accordingly he went out and rebuked the offenders, and as the ecclesiastic head of the parish commanded them to forbear their irregular and improper exhorting, but met with public opposition and defamation while attempting to exert his official authority. One angry partizan even charged him with lying, and another declared, “That by his own words he showed that he did not know the Spirit of God.”

This affair aroused great excitement both in church and society. On the following Sabbath, before administering the Sacrament, Mr. Avery publicly debarred these five offenders from the Lord's table till the matter could be looked into, whereupon Josiah, Ebenezer and Lydia Cleveland and Ezekiel Bacon withdrew from the meeting-house “in the face of the church.” A church-meeting was promptly called to consider these various offences. The two brethren, who had been led by their sympathy with the exhorters to such unseemly defamation of

their good pastor, were very willing to acknowledge that their conduct had been indecent and unchristian, and publicly confess the same before the congregation. The exhorters themselves—Wilson, Spalding and Constance Paine—were treated with great consideration and forbearance, and ample time and opportunity given them to procure testimony and defend themselves. After carefully weighing all the evidence presented and discussing the question in all its bearings, it was decided, October 18:—

“That the church looked upon what the aforesaid Wilson, Spalding and Constance Paine did, on Sept. 10, as public exhorting.

That public speaking, warning, and exhorting of lay persons is unwarrantable and ought to be discountenanced—but inasmuch as the church has not before declared its mind in this matter, and the persons that have done this that we look upon as unwarrantable might not intend to disturb the church, and also, since they seem to think they did their duty in it—it is adjudged, ‘That we ought to be tender with them, and that it may be most for the interest of religion as circumstances are, to pass it over for this time without requiring satisfaction, and with desiring that they would forbear this practice for time to come, as they would not disturb the peace and quiet of the church, nor expose themselves nor the church to further trouble, begging that God would lead them and us into the way of truth and peace.’”

Those church members who had publicly and voluntarily withdrawn from the Lord's table, September 12, were then called upon to give reason for their conduct. Josiah Cleveland declared, “That the persons who were ordered to withdraw by the pastor were unjustly dealt by, and that he ought not to sit down at the Sacrament with those that would do such things.” Ebenezer Cleveland offered, “That some were ordered by Mr. Avery to withdraw for exhorting, and if true Christians as he thought they were must not partake, he thought it was not his duty to partake.” Lydia Cleveland gave as her excuse, “Because Mr. Avery applied a text of Scripture to persons it did not belong to, and called persons disorderly for exhorting and breaking up his peace and debarred them from the Sacrament, when she thought the power of God was with them.” Ezekiel Bacon averred, “That his mind was so ruffled and discomposed by what was acting in the church, that he could not properly partake of the Communion.”

The church considered these excuses, and was of opinion that Bacon's required pity and favorable conduct, and voted, “To pass over his offence,” advising him “To trust to God to compose his mind.” The reasons of the three Clevelands were voted insufficient, and they were judged, “To have broken their covenant and ought to be made sensible of their fault and publicly confess it, and till then to be debarred from Gospel privileges.”

The tenderness of the church in forbearing to exact a public confession from the exhorting brethren was entirely thrown away upon their sympathizers so long as they were restricted in liberty of speech

and exhortation, and in a few days they issued the subjoined spirited manifesto :—

“POMFRET, Nov. 5, 1742.

These are to inform you that your way of discipline and opinion declared in your last judgment against some of the subscribers, doth so fully evidence to us that you are of the number that have the form of godliness and deny the power thereof, that we can in conscience hold communion no longer with you, and do therefore declare that we do dissent and withdraw from you, praying that the Lord would be our guide and direct us in such a weighty affair; also, humbly entreating the Lord for you all, that the Lord of his infinite free sovereign grace would open your eyes and lead both you and us into all truth.

Rebecca Freeman.

Ezekiel Spalding.

Martha Spalding.

Eunice Adams.

John Fasset.

Josiah Fasset.

Benjamin Fasset.

Elizabeth Fasset.

Richard Adams.

Ebenezer Cleveland.

Samuel Wilson.

Betty Wilson.

Abigail Woodward.

Hannah Jewell.

Joseph Cady.

Zachariah Whitney.

Josiah Cleveland.

Lydia Cleveland.

Elias Sheavaler.

Mary Sheavaler.

Joseph Adams.

Elizabeth Adams.

Joshua Paine.

Constance Paine.”

The subsequent conduct of these dissenting members was in accordance with the spirit of this declaration. Attempts to bring them back into church fellowship were wholly ineffectual. At a church meeting, December 14, Richard Adams, Wilson and Fasset declared in behalf of themselves and their associates, “That they required the church to acknowledge their fault, and allow them liberty, even in the most public manner, to speak and exhort except during public worship.” Proposals to lay the matter before a mutual council were scornfully rejected. Efforts were made to convince them of their error and schism, but no formal action taken for some months. In August, 1743, Mr. Avery, by vote of the church, besought the Association “to advise what method to take with our separating brethren,” and received the customary prescription for all ecclesiastic disorders—“To call ye Consociation.” The church decided to accept the advice, cite their separating brethren to appear before the council, and lay it before that body whether they had not been guilty of the sins of “Rash and uncharitable judging of the church; Breach of covenant with it, and making a schism in it.” Captain Holland, Captain Cleveland, Lieutenant Bacon and Samuel Cleveland were chosen committee to provide for the council. In response to their summons, ten ministers with their delegates met at the house of Mr. Avery, October 10. The Separates were invited to appear before them, but, it clearly appearing to them that they had gone in the path of their duty, and not seeing wherein the constitution of the Consociation was granted by the Word of God, could not in conscience comply. The council then proceeded to solve the following queries :—

“I. When may a church be said to have the form and deny the power of godliness? Answer. When they practically deny the genuine and necessary fruits of grace.



II. Whether this church, in their conduct towards their separating brethren, is such as we judge to deserve that character? Answer. No.

III. Whether the separating brethren have charged this church with denying the form of godliness, &c.? Yes.

IV. Whether pastor and church are censurable in conduct towards aggrieved brethren? No.

V. Whether separating brethren are censurable for separation? Yes.

VI. Upon what terms pastor and church ought to receive separating brethren, and what concession is it their duty to make? Aggrieved brethren ought to acknowledge their fault. Pastor and brethren ought not to have proceeded with separating brethren without first taking advice—and upon their making this concession to separate brethren, and they making suitable acknowledgements, viz.: ‘That we have been guilty of unwarrantable separation, rash judging and censuring; desire to be deeply humbled before God for our sin, and ask forgiveness of God and his people’—they ought to walk together in future in love and charity.”

The church voted, October 19, to accept the result, and formally conceded, “That we ought to have taken advice before proceeding with separating brethren”—but the consciences of the refractory members would not allow them to pay the least heed to reproof or concession. After several attempts to bring them to better temper, the church prepared a suitable admonition, “warning each to repent of their sins, which were plain violations of the holy laws of God; very odious and offensive in his sight—all division and separation being forbidden in the Word of God, as also a judging and censorious spirit.” On being cited to appear in the meeting-house, April 22, 1744, and receive this admonition, three of the brethren sent “a very reflecting letter, Letting you know, that in our judgment, that no church which denies the power of godliness has any right to discipline the children of God.” Richard, Joseph, and Elizabeth Adams, Josiah Cleveland, and Ezekiel and Martha Spalding obeyed the summons, but when called upon by the pastor “to stand forth and receive the admonition,” persistently kept their seats. Henry Smith and Joseph Holland read it to those who refused to attend, and after all their pains and labor *one* repentant Separate owned himself wrong, and was brought back into the fold of the church.

The separating brethren now sought advice from a council of New Light ministers, convened June 20, 1744, at the house of Benjamin Fasset—the Rev. Messrs. Owen, Jewett, Pomeroy, Bliss and many others—which the church in turn refused to recognize “as a council agreeable to the Word of God.” In spite of this judgment, “they presumed to hear the case and give advice,” and also “to *fault*” those who had called them for certain improprieties of expression, whereupon another council was summoned in August, but whether its “result” was any more satisfactory is not manifest.

After giving the separating brethren a full year to digest their admonition, May 17, 1745, they were summoned for farther discipline. Upon being asked to give their reasons for their continued absence

from the stated religious worship and ordinances, Ezekiel Spalding replied, "Because the run of Mr. Avery's preaching hath a tendency to set the souls short of Christ, and is delivered in a cold, lifeless way, and not attended with power. 2. Brethren with you hold to Saybrook Platform, which I cannot subject unto, as it takes the power from the brethren and church. 3. The two letters sent out in the name of the Association come forth contrary to the rule of God's Word." His wife, Martha, "knew no bounds to a particular church of Christ but an explicit covenant, and knew not any that submits her to the second church of Pomfret, and looked not on herself as under its discipline." Samuel Wilson's excuse was their "not allowing lay preaching and not making conversion a form of communion." Mary Spalding's "soul never had any communion with them, and she was not fed by Mr. Avery's preaching." One sister had separated, "Because Mr. Avery said some might be children of God and not know it, and also cast out her dear brethren that she expected to reign with in glory;" another, "Because Mr. Avery appeared to her a wolf in sheep's clothing and a false teacher, and looked more to the *fleece* than the flock;" a brother, "Because the pastor bid men hold their peace when they were crying 'Hosanna to the Son of David.'" The church decided these reasons insufficient, and publicly administered a second and more severe admonition:—

"1. For obstinacy and impenitency in ye sins of unwarrantable separation.

2. For casting contempt upon the authority of the church, some by refusing to hear the first admonition, and others by keeping their seats and refusing orderly to attend to it.

3. For a censorious and uncharitable letter."

Josiah Cleveland, Whitney and Fasset were present at the reading of this admonition, others refused to attend or to hear it read by the appointed committee. Two or three confessed their errors, and were received again into the church. Richard Adams died during this year, "without giving any satisfaction." After waiting more than another year for the return of the delinquents, the church reluctantly proceeded to consider the question of excommunication. A day of fasting and prayer was observed—the Reverend Messrs. Ebenezer Williams, Cabot, Cogswell, Devotion and Mosely participating in the services and with the church approving the sentence of excision now proposed. Ezekiel Spalding and Joseph Adams "appeared and pleaded, 'That they ought not to be cut off from the church.'" Fourteen of the most obstinate refusing to retract or ask for mercy, were publicly excommunicated, December 14, 1746. Eleven others, after further trial persisting in separation, were formally admonished, April 13, 1748, but none appeared in church to hear the admonition, and when it was carried to their houses,

some refused to touch it and some "threw it into the fire." Most of these Separates united with the church at Canterbury. Ebenezer Cleveland and some of the more prominent seceders were finally taken back into church fellowship. The Separates in Mortlake Parish were treated with unusual delicacy and forbearance, and as they failed to effect any new church organization within its limits, their defection left no permanent breach, and scarcely impaired the strength and prosperity of the church.

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The church in Killingly, though destitute of a pastor and agitated by a most desperate meeting-house controversy, received about sixty to its membership during the Great Revival. Great and irreconcilable religious differences were however developed during this period, the inhabitants of its southern section adopting decided Separate principles. These southern residents had long been allowed to have a minister in their own neighborhood, and after their incorporation into the new south society, which differed greatly from them in views of church government and doctrine, they preferred to organize as a distinct church. The original covenant is not preserved, nor the date of its adoption and names of its first signers. Among the early members were John Grover, John Eaton, Daniel Lawrence, Levi Preston, John Wilson, Wyman Hutchins, William and Stephen Spalding and many others. "At a Congregational Church meeting, December, 1746, Stephen Spalding was chosen clerk." In February following, the same was chosen deacon. April 27, 1747, "John Eaton was also chosen deacon, and Samuel Wadsworth our pastor, by a vote." Mr. Wadsworth accepting, "June 3, 1747, was set apart for fasting and prayer, on purpose to ordain our pastor and deacons." No Separate minister within the county received so "regular" and satisfactory an ordination. Some of the most respected Separate ministers were present. The sermon was preached by Rev. Matthew Smith of Stonington; Rev. Joseph Snow of Providence gave the charge; Ebenezer Cleveland of Canterbury the right hand. Isaac Backus the church historian, and Oliver Prentice of Stonington assisted in the laying on of hands. So prolonged were the exercises that there was no time for the appointed ordination of the deacons, which was deferred for a week, "when, after prayer to God, brothers Spalding and Eaton were ordained into their lots."

Very little is known of the early days of this South Killingly church, but they probably were not unprosperous. Unlike every other Separate church in Windham County, it met no open opposition. These distant residents had long been practically a distinct branch, and were

allowed to withdraw and develop as they chose without remonstrance or excommunication, but as members of the south society they were still obliged to pay rates for the support of the church on Break-neck. Their pastor was brother of Rev. John Wadsworth, and had resided for a few years in Canterbury, where his house had served the Separates in lieu of their lost meeting-house. He is described by one of his friends in Killingly "as a man of an excellent gift in prayer, very fervent and very gifted in exhortation; his preaching as small, yet apt in many expressions; his conduct extraordinarily religious, and his conversation very heavenly and good." Several of the remaining Indians in South Killingly, once so disorderly and troublesome, were converted during the Revival, and were led to reform their lives and unite with this church.

## IX.

### PLAINFIELD SEPARATE CHURCH. ORDINATIONS OF THOMAS STEVENS AND DAVID ROWLAND. CONTENTIONS IN PLAINFIELD. SEPARATION IN VOLUNTOWN.

**T**HE Separate church in Plainfield, according to the usual practice of its order, called one of its own members to the ministry. The following letter missive, inviting Canterbury church to assist at his ordination, is believed to be its sole surviving official document:—

"Dearly Beloved: This Christ's church having given our brother, Thomas Stevens, Jun., a call to the office of a minister in this Christ's church, and he having excepted or obeyed the call, and having younanimously apointed Thursday, the 11th of Sept. inst., if God will, in solom fasting and prayer, to ordain our brother Stevens to said office: Theas are therefor to desire you to joyn with us in this solemnity on said day, by sending as many of your brethren as you think fit to be present with and assist us as the Lord shall direct us. Dearly Beloved, pray for us, that we may be strong in the faith, giving glory to God, abounding in love and patience, &c. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.

We subscribe, your brethren in the faith and fellowship of the Gospel:—

JAMES MARSH.

EDWARD EAMES.

JOSEPH WARREN.

Liquise you are desired to meat at the house of Joseph Spalding's in Plainfield."

Elders Thomas Denison, Thomas Marsh and Solomon Paine—the latter himself ordained the day preceding—assisted in this ordination service. December 5, Elisha and Solomon Paine and Samuel Wadsworth assisted in the ordination of certain brethren of the church to the office of deacon. Of the number of the church thus organized and supplied with officers, no record is preserved, but it was evidently very flourishing. The peculiar circumstances of the town had developed



a strong Separate element. Mr. Coit was now aged and infirm, unable to cope with this new and powerful influence, or even to carry on the ordinary religious services unaided, and the town was compelled to pay for the support of an inefficient minister and provide a suitable assistant. This double burden caused much grumbling and disaffection towards the church establishment. Some of the assistants procured were New Lights, and strengthened the growing proclivity in their favor. A majority of the standing church were opposed to the New Light doctrines, and had steadily refused to accede to any of the demands of the minority, but after the separation they found it very difficult to maintain their footing without an active working pastor. The pastor of the Separate church, Thomas Stevens, though a young man of less than common education, was earnest and fervent, "filled with the spirit, a clear and powerful preacher." Large numbers were attracted to hear him, and soon it became evident that more than a majority of the inhabitants of the town were in sympathy with the Separates. The payment of the rate for Mr. Coit was refused by this majority. December 16, 1746, the town voted, "To seek out some suitable person to assist in the work of the ministry." Deacon Crary, Joel Shepard and James Bradford were appointed a committee to apply themselves to such suitable person. The Rev. Mr. Newell, who had previously preached as an assistant, was first selected but not secured, town and church probably failing to agree in their views of suitability. Mr. David Rowland of Fairfield was the next candidate, a young man of marked ability, energy and decision, who was graduated from Yale in 1743. Like his cotemporary in Canterbury, James Cogswell, Mr. Rowland was at first acceptable to all parties, so that, July 13, 1747, the town voted to give him a call, and appointed a committee to confer with him concerning his principles, in which conference Mr. Rowland, who was exceedingly earnest and outspoken, showed such attachment to Saybrook Platform and opposition to the peculiar Separate principles, "that the town in general concluded to proceed no farther but to make application to some other candidate." The standing church on the other hand, was greatly pleased with the boldness and soundness of the candidate, and resolved to settle him for their pastor in spite of the opposition of the town. Thus these two opposing towns, Plainfield and Canterbury, were involved in ministerial controversies precisely opposite in character—a majority of the town on one side the Quinebaug and a majority of the church on the other, rejecting the selected candidate.

The controversy in Plainfield, as in Canterbury, was attended with much bitterness and ill-feeling. The roughness with which the aged and disabled pastor was thrown aside and his salary withheld from him

by the Separate party, could not but excite very strong resentment in his personal friends and adherents—while a legal action brought by Mr. Coit for the recovery of his dues, and the prospect of having to pay large sums for the support of a minister who was no longer able to serve in official capacity, increased the violence and opposition of the Separates. With a young and vigorous leader heading each faction, the strife waxed hotter and fiercer. The Separates not only controlled all the secular affairs of the town but claimed a monopoly of all its spiritual vitality. Great pains were taken by them to gain Mercy Wheeler to their interests. A letter was written to her by Solomon Paine urging her to leave a dead and corrupt church and join in the great work of reformation. Stevens, with the rashness of judgment and speech characteristic of his party, even declared to her, “That he knew she had no communion with God, nor would have any more, because if she had she would leave her father’s house, for they were in the broad road to destruction, . . . if she knew her parents were in Christ she had a duty to do to them, but if not, none.” Neither entreaties nor threats sufficed to move the quiet, steadfast Mercy, who remained faithful to the church of her fathers and her aged minister, in spite of “all the attempts to draw her off from the faith and order of the Gospel, a humble, modest, steadfast, lively Christian, exhibiting ever brighter evidence of the grace of God.”

The town refusing to confirm the call to Mr. Rowland, or make any provision for his maintenance, matters remained stationary for some months, the church meanwhile enjoying his ministrations and resolute in her determination to settle him as pastor. Confident in the superiority of their numbers, and supposing that their rejection of Mr. Rowland was definitely understood and settled, and that as soon as accounts could be arranged with him the town would take steps to introduce another candidate, the Separates grew careless in attending town meetings held about ministerial affairs, especially as many of them were opposed to managing those affairs by civil authority, and thus it came to pass that at the annual town-meeting, December 3, 1747, the friends of Mr. Rowland, very much to their own surprise, found themselves in the majority. Only about fifty voters were present, not half the number then pertaining to Plainfield, but as it was a regular meeting, legally warned, the church party hastened to avail themselves of the favorable opportunity, and by a fair majority voted, “To call Mr. David Rowland to the work of the ministry in Plainfield; offering £700 settlement and £400 salary—the latter to be raised on the proportion of corn at twelve shillings pr. bushel; rye, at eighteen; wheat, twenty-four; oats, eight; beef, one shilling pr. pound; pork, two—and also his fire wood.” The Separate party was greatly shocked and dismayed

by this most unexpected stroke of town authority, but was forced to abide by it. Appeals to the Assembly for the annulment of the vote would have been utterly useless, and having relaxed in vigilance they were compelled to pay the penalty. The friends of the church were equally elated with their triumph and eager to take advantage of it. The call of the town was speedily reiterated and confirmed by the church, and Mr. Rowland most earnestly besought to accept these invitations and become the minister of Plainfield. To accept this position in the face of an indignant majority, already clamoring fiercely against him and refusing to pay for his previous services, his board, and even the sweeping of the meeting-house, required no small degree of courage and resolution, and even Mr. Rowland, with all his spirit and pugnacity, would hardly have ventured to enter the breach had the opposition to himself been more personal. But the chief and almost sole objection of the Separates was his adherence to the Ecclesiastic Constitution of Connecticut. Any other minister favoring Saybrook Platform would have been similarly rejected. It was a question of principles, not of persons, and for those principles Mr. Rowland was willing to battle, and thus signified his acquiescence:

*"Feb. 2, 1748. Notwithstanding the unhappy difficulties that are subsisting, which there appears no way at present to escape, and as it seems necessary that by somebody they should be surmounted, and finding in myself a willingness to undertake so arduous a work, I accept the call, relying on Christ for support. O that I might go forth in the strength of the Lord, expecting help and assistance from you in this great and difficult undertaking.*

DAVID ROWLAND."

As the need of a minister was so urgent, an ordaining council was convened on the 15th of March following. Reverends Ebenezer Williams, Samuel Dorrance, Marston Cabot, Samuel Mosely and Ebenezer Devotion, with the messengers, Deacons Ebenezer Holbrook, John Kasson, Jonathan Clough, William Durkee and Nathaniel Bingham, were present. The Rev. Mr. Coit appeared before them, and, in consideration of his age and the peculiarly difficult circumstances of the town, desired a dismissal of his pastoral relations to church and congregation and the ordination of Mr. Rowland as his successor in his pastoral office. The council, for the reasons alleged, formally dismissed him from this office, recommending him to the charity and communion of the church in Plainfield, and to occasional public service at God's altar in other churches, if his age should permit. Satisfactory testimonials of the ministerial abilities and qualifications of Mr. Rowland were next received. "A considerable number of inhabitants then appeared," and exhibited the following objections against proceeding to ordain him:—

"I. That Mr. Rowland does not appear as a minister of Christ and is apt to deny the truth.

II. That the town has now a minister ordained over it and the church—Mr. Joseph Coit.

III. That more than one-half of the inhabitants is averse and against Mr. Rowland's being settled."

With regard to the first charge, it was further alleged, that while Mr. Rowland's preaching was acceptable and savory, yet in visiting families he was defective in not forwarding religious discourse, and talking lightly upon things that rather called for a lamentation, and neglecting to discourse with a person that was upon a sick bed. The council thereupon talked with Mr. Rowland and administered reproof, which he received penitently and promised amendment. As to the alleged variations from truth, the council adjudged them mistakes or common forgetfulness, not worthy of consideration.

The second objection of the opposers was pronounced by the council a mere quibble. As Mr. Coit was not considered to be fully discharged till his successor was formally installed in the pastoral office, his opponents, "to serve a turn," had raised this most absurd and untenable objection. The council was grieved at such inconsistent and inferior conduct, manifesting such insincerity, and so far from considering it an argument against Mr. Rowland's settlement, "'t'was an awful specimen of the great need they had of a minister and head, to be placed over them with all convenient speed."

As to the fact that more than half of the inhabitants were opposed to Mr. Rowland, though it was a matter of great lamentation, yet considering that the great part of his opposers would oppose the settlement of any regular Gospel minister, the council was of opinion that this ought not to prevent ordination. Considering, moreover, the broken state of the people and the disappointments they had met in attempting to settle a minister, the breach growing wider among them, and the hopeful prospect that Mr. Rowland might be a blessing to them, the council thought it would betray a faithlessness to their Lord and a lack of fidelity to the people of Plainfield if they should fail to ordain Mr. Rowland as their minister, and unanimously voted to proceed to that service. Mr. Coit made the first prayer; Mr. Mosely preached; Mr. Dorrance offered prayer before and Mr. Cabot after charge; Mr. Williams gave the charge; Mr. Devotion the right hand of fellowship.

Thus the very ministers who had given Canterbury a minister in opposition to a majority of the church, had now settled one in Plainfield contrary to a majority in the town. The result of both experiments was equally unsatisfactory. The "hopeful prospects" that had influenced the decision in the latter town were not realized, and the settlement of a pastor only increased the difficulties and disorders. The Separate party held the purse and the power, and resolutely



refused to pay the stipulated settlement and salary. Even the sum due for preaching before ordination was secured with great difficulty and all farther payment scrupulously withheld and only obtained by legal process. The controversy in Plainfield thus assumed a secular and litigious character. The right of laymen to preach and of churches to ordain their own ministers, the necessity of full assurance and of intercommunion between saints, received less consideration than the important question propounded at every annual town-meeting: "Will the town now proceed to pay Mr. Rowland his salary according to the covenant on town records?"—a question always answered "No!" by a large majority. Year after year, Mr. Rowland was compelled to sue the town and follow the action through the several courts of the county before he could obtain a penny of his salary. Charges for repairing the meeting-house and other needful expenses were only recovered by the same troublesome process. So bitter was the spirit of the town, that when compelled by the judgment of the Courts to pay these claims, it had the inhumanity and ingratitude to levy a four-fold assessment from the estate of their superannuated pastor, Mr. Coit, who only obtained relief by petitioning the General Assembly. All this litigation and vexation might have been avoided had the church party, like their opponents, assumed the charge of their own religious worship, but such a pusillanimous yielding of legal rights and privileges was entirely contrary to the spirit of the age and the character of its stout-hearted leaders, who like their predecessors in the early boundary contest, preferred "to fight it out on that line" at whatever cost and trouble. The Separates, though heavily taxed like all the inhabitants of the town, for legal expenses and the payment of executions, were able to support their minister and build a convenient meeting-house by voluntary contributions, and increased constantly in strength and numbers, while the ancient established church as steadily weakened and declined, its strength and vitality wasted in frantic efforts to compel an unwilling town to support a hostile minister and worship. These divisions and animosities greatly embittered the closing years of Plainfield's first pastor, the venerable Mr. Coit, who died July 1, 1750, leaving a precious memory—"even those disaffected with his preaching, never appearing to have any personal prejudice against him." Mr. Rowland, thus left alone, carried on the war with great spirit and vigor, encouraged by the verdicts always given in his favor, and not disheartened by all the obloquy and abuse heaped upon him by his opponents.

The most that is known of the Plainfield Separates is given by their opponents. The Rev. Mr. Cogswell reports them as much less bitter and fierce than those of Canterbury, a difference occasioned probably

by the difference in their position ; in one town holding the power, and in the other, held under it. With Separates for town officers, the Separates could hold meetings at pleasure ; could speak when they chose, and hear such ministers as they fancied, and, if forced to pay rates, had at least the privilege of fighting against it. A dominant party holds a very different position from a subject one, and the Plainfield Separates, in their subsequent development, showed what their party might have been under more favoring circumstances. Their chief antagonist, Mr. Rowland, with candor and charity as rare as his pluck, leaves this testimony in their favor :—

“Although some things appeared among them at first very unwarrantable, yet considering their infant state it must be acknowledged by all that were acquainted with them, that they were a people, in general, conscientiously engaged in promoting truth, and Mr. Stevens, their minister, a very clear and powerful preacher of the Gospel, as must be acknowledged by all who heard him.”

But neither the “clear and powerful” preaching of Mr. Stevens, nor the stirring and savory discourses of Mr. Rowland, could prevent great spiritual declension among the people. The life and energies of the town were absorbed in its legal contests. The revival spirit died away. The churches grew cold and languid. The religious fervor and enthusiasm which had arisen to such a height after the miraculous cure of Mercy Wheeler was almost wholly dissipated ; to be followed by a period of corresponding deadness and depression.

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The great religious awakening in Voluntown, reported by the Rev. Eleazer Wheelock, was followed by the usual dissensions and church division. A large part of the population embraced Separate principles and became hostile to the established church and pastor. The salary originally granted to Mr. Dorrance was now much depreciated in value and entirely inadequate for the support of himself and family, but the town persistently refused to allow any addition, only as compelled by special order from the Assembly. Year after year, Mr. Dorrance was compelled to repeat the pitiful story, that the town would pay him nothing but the hundred pounds in bills of credit, and then extort by law the two or three hundred pounds accorded.

The date of the organization of a Separate church in this town is not preserved. In 1745, Peter Miller, Thomas Thompson, Benjamin Park, Robert Campbell, James and Thomas Douglas and John Kennedy departed from communion and set up private worship on the Sabbath, and when cited before the pastor and elders to answer for their breach of covenant, averred, “That the session had no right to determine such matters.” Warnings and admonitions were all in vain. Others joined

in the schism until, in 1748, those previously disciplined, together with Isaac Gallup, Samuel Smith, Matthew Patrick, John Gaston, Robert Hinman, Robert Gibson and James Stranahan, were formally cut off from the church. No record of their proceedings is preserved till, after "being long scattered as sheep not having a shepherd," they appear in church estate, and having united in the choice of their beloved brother, Alexander Miller—sent forth letters inviting other Separate churches to assist in ordaining him as their minister, at the house of John Gibson, April 17, 1751. Alexander and Peter Miller were the sons of a Scotch-Irish Presbyterian, who settled in Voluntown about 1720. Both were earnest in promoting the Separate movement and resisting the ecclesiastic authority of Connecticut, and suffered severely from the spoiling of their goods and imprisonment. Alexander was a man of commanding appearance and marked character, superior in education to most of the Separate ministers. No record is left of the church to which he ministered. The "footsteps of Satan," so early detected by Mr. Wheelock, became apparently more and more obvious, and left behind them impressions of dreams, visions, supernatural appearances, and many delusions and disorders. Voluntown was evidently in great confusion and anarchy during this period. Its ancient Presbyterian church was divided and broken, and the new Separate church, after a few troubled years, united with that of Plainfield.

## X.

### SEPARATE CHURCHES IN WINDHAM AND SCOTLAND. SIX- PRINCIPLE BAPTIST CHURCHES IN THOMPSON, CHESTNUT HILL AND WOODSTOCK.

THE First Church of Windham, under the ministry of Mr. White, received over one hundred members during the Great Revival. A number of these converts adopted Separate principles and organized as a Separate church in 1747, ordaining their brother, Elisha Marsh, as their pastor. It does not appear that this church was ever very thriving or vigorous. Mild Mr. White persuaded the more rigid disciplinarians "not to drive things," and apparently allowed the seceding brethren to fall away without resistance. The Separate church, thus left to itself, soon fell to pieces. Its pastor became a Baptist, its more moderate members returned to their allegiance, while others were absorbed into the more vigorous churches of Mansfield and Scotland Parish. The town, in general, was greatly disturbed by the Separate agitation, and so many Separates were confined in its prison that the

new story added was quite insufficient, and a new jail and dwelling-house ordered in 1753, "between the brow of the hill against Mr. Joseph Huntington's and Mr. Elias Franklin's currying shop." The most active and efficient sympathizer with the imprisoned Separates was Joshua Abbe of North Windham, known widely as "King Abbe"—a man of large heart, generous impulses and exceedingly liberal opinions. It was he who, when asked to help a poor man who had lost his only cow, replied, "Away with your subscription paper, go into my herd and take your pick among the cows, and be sure you get a good one;" who helped build scaffolding about the jail for Elisha Paine to preach on, and who opened his hospitable doors to Quakers, Shakers and Ranters of every shade and description. Abbe, himself, was often arrested and imprisoned as a person "of evil name and fame and vile and profane discourse, guilty of high-handed misdemeanor against common law and rights of mankind." One of his chief coadjutors was Benajah Douglas formerly of Canterbury, who aided him in maintaining irregular meetings and resisting the arrest of exhorters, and for such an outbreak at the house of Joshua Abbe, July 9, 1747, was sentenced to be imprisoned in Windham jail and kept many months at hard labor. The separation in Windham evidently embraced a very lawless and disreputable element, and falling into gross error and extravagance, gained no permanent footing in the community.

In Scotland Parish, affairs took a very different turn. A very respectable portion of the church became dissatisfied with the existing discipline, and adopted decided Separate principles. Mr. Devotion, who was strongly attached to church order and the Saybrook Platform, wholly refused to grant them any concessions or liberty, whereupon they withdrew from the stated religious worship and held separate meetings in private houses. January 22, 1746, several offending church members, viz., Joseph and Hannah Wood, Benjamin and Anne Cleveland, Zebulon and Hannah Hebard, the wife of Samuel Manning, John Walden, Daniel Ross, Amos Kingsley, Peleg Brewster, Thomas and Henry Bass, John, Sarah, Mary and Margaret Wilkinson—were cited to appear before the pastor and brethren of the church, and "give their reasons for separating for a long time from the worship or ordinances which God had set up among them." The offenders appeared, and offered the following reasons:—

1. That this church is not a church of Christ in regular standing; nor grounded, as they know of, upon any foundation.
2. That Mr. Devotion has broken a divine rule in signing a paper, with other ministers, against Lawyer Paine and reading it to his congregation; as also, his reading a paper to his congregation against unauthorized men's preaching, and likewise his preaching corrupt doctrine, viz., his preaching works before faith, and his setting poor, blinded sinners to work in order to obtain their salvation.
3. That Mr. Devotion did not preach Christ according to their understanding.
4. That



the voice of Canaan was not to be heard in his preaching. 5. That they did not perceive that he preached the truths of the Gospel, and that they separated for the sake of better preaching, viz.: Dea. Marsh's, Solomon Paine's and others, whose preaching fed their souls. 6. That the church admitted to communion persons that were not converted. 7. That they did not look upon Mr. Devotion to be a faithful minister, and did look upon the church to be a church of Anti-Christ. 8. That they could not profit by Mr. Devotion's preaching, but did profit by that of Lawyer Paine, Dea. Marsh and Solomon Paine. Some gave one of these reasons; some gave others of them."

The church decided the reasons to be insufficient, and in an admonitory paper called upon the separating members to return, and warned them of their danger. A committee of fifteen brethren was chosen to carry round the paper, and after taking pains to enlighten and convince, read it to the refractory members. "John Walden and Hannah Hebard were allowed a longer time for consideration. Thomas Bass was dismissed from church process, forasmuch as he was not fixed in his separation." March 17, 1746, the church declared:—

"Whereas, divers offending members have given these reasons for separating, which reasons appear insufficient, and also carry in them gross, unjust and defamatory reflections either upon the church or pastor, for which, together with their unjust and sinful separation, they ought to be ashamed, humbled, convinced and brought to repentance, and, therefore, until such time as they visibly manifest their repentance; This church does by the command of our Lord Jesus, solemnly withdraw from them as disorderly walkers and renounce communion with them as persons who cause divisions and contentions, contrary to the doctrines which we have heard and learned—hereby debarring them of all powers to act in any church affairs and depriving them of all right to the special ordinances of the Gospel, agreeable to II. Thess. iii: 14. Nevertheless, our prayer for them shall be, that God would open their eyes, subdue their wills, overcome their obstinacy, that they may be humbled, reformed and brought to repentance, and that their souls may be saved in the day of the Lord."

"The aforesaid brethren remaining obstinate, after waiting more than the time prescribed (two months), sentence of excommunication was publicly read." Measures had already been taken by them for uniting in church estate. Having now had time to examine their objections and reduce them to more regular and logical form, they thus formally stated their reasons for their dissent from the established church in Scotland Parish:—

"1. They have not covenanted together in any form of discipline according to the Word of God, but act upon Saybrook Platform, which we think disagreeable to the Word of God."

2. We dissent from them because they admit of half-membership, or persons owning the covenant and coming to the ordinance of baptism and stopping there, which we find no rule for in the Word of God.

3. Because they receive members into the church without giving personal satisfaction to the church that they are members of Christ by declaring what God hath done for their souls. Rom. x: 9, 10. I. Cor. ii: 27, 28, 29.

4. They appear partial in their discipline, denying those to act that are naturally related to them and that are dealt with in the church, there being no rule for it in the Word of God.

5. Because we find a form of godliness among them and not the power, and from such we are commanded to turn away. II. Tim. iii: 5.

6. For want of gospel preaching in the clear demonstration of the Spirit and the power.

7. Because they suffer their pastor to have that power which Christ hath given to the Church. Matt. xviii: 15, 16, 17—but by holding the Saybrook Platform, they give the Council the decisive power, and the pastor the negative power in the church.

8. Because they suffer the pastor to sit in Council as church messenger when neither chosen nor empowered by the church. Acts xv: 22, 23.

9. They exclaim against the present work of God in the land and call it the work of the Devil or enthusiasm; that in general, they reject the present work which we conceive to be the work of God's Spirit, turning men from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God—for the same cause the Apostle separated the disciples from them that speak evil of that way. Acts xix: 8, 9.

10. Because of the persecuting among them, as appears to us, against those that hold to the present work, and especially against those that improve the gifts that God hath given them, by imprisoning their bodies, or vilifying them, or executing laws upon them to bind their consciences in matters of religion, which we never find in the Church of Christ. 'If they persecute you in one city, flee to another.'

11. They deny that any should teach or exhort in any public manner besides the pastor, which God hath expressly commanded. I. Cor. xiv: 31.

12. They deny those that are dealt with in the church to plead their own case except they acknowledge them to be a church of Christ in regular state, when we cannot acknowledge them for the above reasons—and thus having declared to the church those things wherein we cannot agree with them, we now soberly, and deliberately, and conscientiously declare our dissent from them, wishing the salvation of their souls.

Cornelius Waldo.  
Lemuel Bingham.  
Zebulon Rudd.

Peleg Brewster.  
Henry Bass.  
Jacob Perkins.

Benj. Cleveland.  
Daniel Ross."

Mr. Devotion replied to these articles with equal formality, "in the name and by the desire of the brethren," considering each specific charge at great length, wholly denying some, and justifying the church in those admitted. His own views of the Revival are clearly set forth in his answer to the charge of rejecting the present work of God in the land, viz.:—

"If they mean by this, a separation from the churches in the land, an encouraging and setting up exhorters and lay teachers to preach and teach, and administer in the church (many of whom have scarcely acquaintance enough with the doctrines of the Gospel, or even with the first principles of the Christian religion, to be admitted members of a Christian church): if they mean judging, censuring and in words *Damning* men whom they dis-esteem; if they mean a boisterous treatment of their fellow creatures. Bellowing after them like strong Bulls of Bashan. when they are quietly traveling through the streets, which things have become common with many Separates; if this, or anything like this, is what they mean by 'the present work of God in the land' . . . . we are so far from calling it a work of God's Spirit, that we esteem it highly dishonoring to God, and even blasphemous, to impute such folly and wickedness to his Holy Spirit."

The separating brethren, without waiting for this reply to their allegations, had already united in church estate by adopting the subjoined articles and covenant:—

"1. Christ gave the keys to his church. Christ is the Institutor of his church.

2. Christ is the Door, by whom all that come, enter in.

3. Christ unites his church together as a compact body, sets every member in his place, furnisheth them with gifts to profit, withal.

4. Christ is Head over all things to this Church by the decree of the Father.

5. The church is called Christ's house and himself is Lord of his house.

Christ gives all the laws and ordinances of his worship. The Church of Christ is a spiritual house, so that there is no human power can build Christ's church nor give a church rules or laws to work by. The Scriptures being a perfect rule to walk by and the only rule of faith and practice in religion, we have written our faith and discipline in short.

We believe in one God; three Persons in the God-head. In fore-ordination, general and special providence, &c.

We believe the supreme and lordly power in all the churches upon earth belongeth wholly to Jesus Christ, who is King and Head thereof. He hath the government upon his shoulder. The sovereign power of Christ is exercised by himself—

1. In calling his church.
2. In instituting ordinances.
3. In giving laws for the ordering of all our ways and the ways of his house.
4. In giving life to all his institutions and to his people by them.
5. In protecting and delivering his people.

The power granted by Christ to the body of the Church is a prerogative exercised by them—

1. In admitting their own members.
2. In choosing and ordaining their own officers.
3. In removing them from their office and also from fellowship.
4. The Gospel ministry is to be supported, the ordinances and the poor of the church without using the civil sword or any coercive means to force men thereto. Magistrates are God's ministers bearing the sword of justice, and it is our duty to honor their persons, pray God for them, and obey them in all their lawful commands."

This Scotland Separate church was organized in the summer of 1746, and soon gained a very respectable position, receiving to its membership some of the leading families in the parish. Mr. Devotion was greatly disturbed by its intrusion within his lawful limits, and encouraged the extortion of rates and the enforcement of all legal penalties from its members. The ministers of Windham County, finding all their attempts to stay the tide of separation ineffectual, felt it their duty to formally protest against it. Baptisms administered by Thomas Marsh, Solomon Paine and other Separate elders were declared "not valid," by the Association. A committee was chosen, "to draw a narrative of the affair of a number of men at Mansfield, pretending to form themselves into church state and ordain officers among them." A meeting of Consociation was held in Scotland, January 13, 1747, "to take into consideration and give advice relative to the lamented divisions and errors which have arisen," and to hear the information gathered by the Association's committee. Sixteen ministers with their delegates were present. Notifications were sent to Elisha and Solomon Paine, Thomas Marsh and Thomas Stevens, desiring them to appear before the pastors and churches from which they had separated. After recommending that a day of fasting and prayer be kept previously in all the churches, the council adjourned till February 11. The summoned Separate leaders refusing to appear, the Consociation proceeded to examine their principles and practice, as set forth in their so-called church covenants, and declared, "That whenever they varied from the

ordinary confession of faith, they marred the sense or perverted Scripture doctrine, and under pretence of Congregational discipline, set up as absolute an Independency as ever was heard of; that the Canterbury scheme, though differing from Mansfield and Plainfield and mainly orthodox, was still deficient and left room for the errors plainly spoken out by the others, evidencing that they are of one heart." Among the errors noted were—"That there are two meanings in the Bible, doctrinal and spiritual, which latter none can come to knowledge of but by special revelation; that Christian assurance is the essence of faith, saving faith being a sure persuasion that Christ died for *me*; That children of God know who are converted and who are not, and that the way to know if a minister is a true minister, or a person converted, is by *feeling* the preaching of the one and the discourse of the other; That an unconverted person ought not to pray till such time as he can pray in faith." After hearing much testimony to the doctrinal unsoundness of the Separates; their violence, fanaticism and hostility to the Ecclesiastic Constitution and civil authority, the council declared, That there was no just ground for separation; that the Separates had not proceeded in a Scriptural or Gospel way, but had conducted uncharitably and unchristianly; that, therefore, the churches ought to withdraw fellowship from them as scandalous and disorderly walkers, yet not to give them up as hopeless but make efforts with them as individuals to reclaim them from their errors. In contradiction to a prevailing report, the Consociation now expressly denied, That any one minister in Windham County, however much in sympathy with the Revival, held to certainty of knowledge of piety of others, preaching by illiterate or unauthorized persons; that outcries and bodily agitations were an evidence of the presence of God's Spirit, or to any of those errors of which the Separates were convicted. The result of this Council of the Consociated churches of Windham County, was soon published in a pamphlet and widely circulated.

The Scotland Separate church was quite unaffected by the presence, arguments and unfavorable judgment of this high ecclesiastic authority, but continued to increase in numbers and influence. One of the deacons of the standing church lapsed to the Separates, and other residents of position and character. For a time they enjoyed the occasional ministrations of their favorite ministers, the Paines and Elder Marsh, but when one of their own members—John Palmer, a descendant of one of the early Scotland settlers—exercised too freely his gift of exhortation, he was summarily arrested by the civil authority and kept four months in Hartford jail. His imprisonment only increased his zeal, devotion and opposition to the established churches, and after farther trial, the church united in calling him to its



ministry, and on May 17, 1749, he was ordained its pastor. Though deficient in education and somewhat rough in speech and manner, Mr. Palmer was a man of estimable character and sound piety, and under his guidance the Brunswick church, as it was called, maintained for many years a good standing in the community, comparatively free from those excesses and fanaticisms which marred so many of its cotemporaries. No difficulty was found in supporting its worship by voluntary contributions. A church edifice was built a mile or so southeast of Scotland Village, long known as the Brunswick meeting-house. Mr. Devotion was never reconciled to this intrusion within his parochial diocese, but was accustomed every Sunday morning to send his negro servant with a rescript to the Brunswick meeting house, forbidding Mr. Palmer or any other unauthorized person to preach therein that day—a prohibition which only served to increase the number of attendants and fan the spirit of separation and opposition.

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The northern part of the County was less affected by religious disturbances and separation. The first church of Pomfret, alone of all the Windham County churches, is believed to have escaped wholly unscathed, leaving no record of loss or agitation. In the more northerly churches, a Baptist element was developed, resulting in secession from the standing order and the formation of Baptist churches. The first and strongest of these churches was formed in Thompson Parish, under the guidance of Wightman, son of Nathaniel Jacobs. As Mr. Jacobs had lived for a time in Rhode Island and given his son the name of a noted Baptist elder, it is probable that his sympathies were with the Baptists, although on his removal to Thompson in 1742, he united with the established church. This church received large accessions during the Revival, nor is there any appearance of disaffection or disturbance prior to the irruption of a young Baptist itinerant in 1748. Jeremiah Barstow of Sturbridge, a fervent young exhorter, was probably the first proclaimer in Thompson of Believer's baptism by immersion. At the close of the sermon one Sunday afternoon, he arose from his seat, and, addressing the minister, asked liberty to tell his experience. This request was promptly denied by Mr. Cabot, and the presumptuous intruder "turned out of the meeting-house," whereupon he persisted in exhorting the people before the doors till arrested by proper officers for this breach of law and decorum, was carried next morning to jail, and endured a month's imprisonment. This violent treatment awakened the sympathies of Wightman Jacobs and others, and called public attention to the principles for which Barstow had suffered.

Other Baptist exhorters (probably from Leicester or Sturbridge), extended their labors to this promising field. Meetings were held, principles discussed, and soon a considerable number declared themselves Baptists, withdrew from the stated religious worship, held meetings by themselves, and probably united with the Baptist church of Leicester, as they refused to pay rates for the support of Mr. Cabot. A spirited contest with the society officers followed, in which the Baptists defended their rights with much gallantry. When arrested for holding unlawful meetings, they retaliated by bringing actions against the civil authority for *rioting*, and when "strained upon for rates," claimed the benefit of the Toleration Act, and appealed for relief to the County Court. Their plea was allowed, and exemption granted. The Society was obliged "to pay the Baptists the charges they were put to for being strained on for rates," and "for traveling to Windham," and appointed a committee to agree with them on as easy terms as they could. The rates of several Baptists were then formally abated, viz., Jonathan Marsh, John Atwell, James Coats, Isaac and Nathan Burrill, Thomas Buffington, Eliphalet, Levi and John Wight, and Wightman Jacobs, residents of the north part of the parish. Having thus gained a footing, the above Baptists, with other families in their neighborhood, were organized as a distinct church in 1750, upon the Six Principles of Christ's doctrine, Hebrews vi: 1, 2. These General Baptists differed from others of that order in rejecting the doctrines of personal election and reprobation. They maintained that Christ died for all mankind and that the Holy Spirit came by the laying on of hands of ministers. In many respects they agreed with the Separates, with even a more literal adherence to the letter of Scripture. They did not believe in singing but in recounting the praises of God, mostly in words of Scripture, with a pleasant and cheerful voice; did not believe in sermons, but in exercising gifts in various ways. Many of them practiced the washing of each other's feet, anointing the sick and abstaining from eating blood, but did not insist upon these points as essential. Wightman Jacobs was chosen pastor by the church, and was formally ordained over it. Under his faithful and active labors, the church increased rapidly, so that other churches were formed from it on the same principle in adjoining towns, which united together in a formal Association, comprising eight churches. Very little is known of this General Baptist Association and its constituent churches. They occupied by and waste places, were largely composed of the lower and more ignorant classes, and indulged in some very erratic and extraordinary practices. The Thompson church, probably the strongest and most vigorous, soon suffered division. A number were unable to relinquish the Abrahamic Covenant, and relapsed into Separatism.

According to Dr. Stiles, a Mr. Pierce of Providence, "drew off this separation" from the Baptist church, and was ordained elder over it by Elder Peckam, and then "enlarged his church to comprehend all in this communion in distant, surrounding towns." This Separate church was soon dissolved by the removal of Elder Pierce to Oblong. The Baptist church survived the breach, and continued to flourish for some years. Mr. Cabot, though so opposed to intrusions upon the public worship of the sanctuary, made no attempt to discipline or retain such members as chose to unite with the new organization, and a significant "gone to ye Baptists," inserted beneath the names of a few individuals on the church records, is all that indicates any defection or separation.

A number of the descendants of the first settlers of Chestnut Hill in East Killingly—Bateman, Grover, Draper and others—also became Baptists, and united in Church fellowship upon the Six Principles of Christ's doctrine, and after suffering many trials and discouragements issued the following official document:—

"Feb. 3, 1752.

The church of Christ at Chasnat Hill in Killingly to the church of Christ at Canterbury, sendeth greeting:—

These are to let you know the dooings of the Lord in Zion, wishing you grace, mercy and peas from God our father and our Lord Jesus Christ. God hath returned the captivity of Zion in this place, we having renewed covenant with God and one another, finding in[cour]iadge[m]ent throu the helpe of God, to see this church orginized, God having restored our brother, Benjamin Grover, to us againe in the fellowship of the gospel. Desiering you to send such men as the holy gost shall chuse to asist in the grate work of ordanation, desiering youer prears for ous.

The place apointed for ordination is at the house of Joseph Bateman at Chasnut Hill, and the time apointed Is the fourteen day of february next insuing, ACording to new stile.

GIDEON DRAPER.  
JAMES DRAPER.  
JOSEPH BATEMAN.  
ISAAC GROVER."

For some unassigned cause, this ordination was not effected, nor does it appear that any pastor was ever ordained over this church. It survived a few years, amid increasing trials and obstacles; was included in the Association of General Baptist churches previously noticed, and recognized as a regular church by the Separate church of South Killingly.

The General Baptist church in Woodstock was also included in the Association, and received into the fellowship of the Separate churches. Like the church of Chestnut Hill, its existence was brief and troubled. The first Baptist in Woodstock of whom we have record, was the wife of Colonel Chandler's second son, Joshua—Elizabeth Cutler of Reading. She was evidently a woman of much spirit and independent judgment, and early incurred the censure of the church on Woodstock Hill by absenting herself from the communion from conscientious scruples.

The excuses offered by her for this breach of faith were pronounced by the church, impertinent, trifling and in no measure satisfactory, and advice sought from neighboring ministers. Councils and arguments failed to satisfy her scruples, and after attempting for several years to walk with the church, she became thoroughly convinced of the necessity of Believer's baptism, and with her husband, Samuel Chamberlain, Ebenezer Chapman and his wife, was baptized by Elder Thomas Green of Leicester, and taken into full communion with the Baptist church in that town, October 4, 1749. The First Church of Woodstock, after their defection, thus resolved:—

“Whereas, Ebenezer Chapman and his wife, and Elizabeth Chandler, members of this church, have heretofore renounced communion with this church and other established churches, and have lately joined with that sect called Ana-baptists (at least so far as to renounce their infant baptism and to be re-baptized by plunging); It is our opinion that we are no longer obliged to inspect and watch over them as members of this church.”

These Baptists were all residents of West Woodstock society. Others were added to their number, who after a time united with them in forming a distinct Baptist church upon the Six Principles of Christ's doctrine, and enjoyed the ministrations of Benjamin Grover of Chestnut Hill. This brother, after failing to receive ordination in Killingly, found “all the churches upon the earth taken out of his view and Woodstock church laid into his heart by God.” His wife was also “brought into this church under a great operation of the Spirit of God,” and so manifest were the leadings of Providence that letters missive were sent to the churches in Plainfield, Canterbury, Thompson, Coventry, Killingly and Starbridge, declaring:—

“That the Lord hath founded Zion here and the poor of the people trust in it, and that the poor have and shall have the Gospel preached to them, and to this end has provided pastors for them . . . and sent to us our dear brother, Benjamin Grover, a faithful minister of Jesus Christ, and united us and him together in the Gospel . . . and the voice is Arise, Anoint him, for this is he! Dear Saints, may you hear our masydony cry, Come over and help us to set apart this dear brother to the great work whereto the Holy Ghost hath called him. The day appoynted for this solemn ordination is the second Wednesday of this instant August.

The council is desired to meet at the house of Mr. Joseph Bateman at Chestnut Hill in Killingly, in order to remove some difficulty there, respecting that people and our brother Grover.

EBENEZER CHAPMAN.  
EPHRAIM BACON.  
JOSIUA CHANDLER.  
SAMUEL CHAMBERLAIN.”

*Woodstock, Aug. 7, 1752.*

The council was unable to remove the difficulty with the church of Killingly, and again declined to ordain Grover to the ministry. The Woodstock church failed to unite in choice of another candidate and soon fell to pieces, its members probably reuniting with the parent church at Leicester. The rejected “brother Grover” never, apparently, succeeded in obtaining ordination, but continued through life to itinerate



through the County, exhorting and denouncing wherever he could find a hearing. Tradition represents him as one of the rougher class of Separates, rude and uncouth in speech and manner, fiercely assailing the standing churches and ministry, defying and resisting civil authority and rate-collectors, a terror to children and evil-doers by his fearful threatenings of future punishment and vivid pictures of the Day of Judgment.

## XI.

### MISTAKES IN THE SEPARATE MOVEMENT. OPPOSITION. FAILURE.

IN every town of Windham County, separations from the mother churches had thus been effected and new churches formed, claiming greatly increased purity and spirituality. The privileges of church membership had been restricted to known Christians, unscriptural beliefs and practices abandoned and the Scriptures, interpreted by the Spirit, accepted as their only rule and guide. Their pastors were men of fervent piety, wholly absorbed in the work to which they believed themselves divinely called and consecrated; their members were mostly zealous, active Christians, "conscientiously engaged in promoting and maintaining religious truth." It would seem that such churches could hardly fail to become permanently established, overpowering and rooting out the feeble remnants of the original churches. But the result was precisely contrary. These fresh, vigorous churches, with all their zeal for religious purity and liberty, had but a brief existence and left no lasting impress, while the churches they denounced and abandoned have survived and flourished through many succeeding generations. Battling in advance of their age for religious liberty and pure Congregationalism, advocating a higher Christian life, individual responsibility and activity, and other principles and practices now recognized by all Christian churches—the Separates were wholly vanquished. That they were in advance of the age was not the only cause of their failure. The great truths which they advocated might have won their way in spite of every external opposition had they not been intermingled with some fatal errors. Fighting against the age, against established religious systems and practices, against the civil and ecclesiastic Constitutions of Connecticut—the deadliest foe of the Separates was their own ignorance and folly. Assuming that they were God's church and all others anti-Christian and Satanic, they thundered maledictions against

all who opposed God's work and church and people, which were only too literally fulfilled in their own swift destruction.

One of the mistakes or errors which wrought such mischief among the Separates, was their rejection of human learning. Learned men having opposed them, they opposed all learning. Knowledge of tongues was a snare, and encouraged pride and self-confidence. A man need not study who had the Spirit of God to teach him. An inward call was the only essential qualification for a minister. Thus their spiritual leaders were uneducated and often ignorant men, expounding Scripture according to their own fancy. All parts of the Bible were used indiscriminately. Plain commands were spiritualized and figures taken literally. Dreams and visions supplied the place of dictionary and commentary. Scripture truth was often perverted and misapprehended, and very gross errors promulgated and received among them.

A still more fatal error was assuming to know perfectly the spiritual condition of others. Christ had given them "the key of knowledge." A Christian could be distinguished from an unbeliever as certainly and clearly "as a sheep may be known from a dog." Those only with whom "they held communion in the inward actings of their own souls" were Christians; all others were unbelievers and hypocrites. By this simple rule, all the churches and church members of the land were tried and found wanting. "We know we are of God and the whole world lyeth in wickedness." All persons not in immediate active sympathy with them, were thus cut off from Christian charity and given over to reprobation and perdition. The churches planted by their fathers in faith and prayer were Papal and Anti-Christ. Godly ministers who had proved their faith by lives of devoted Christian labor, were teachers for lucre, lying shepherds, dead dogs, followers of the Beast and Dragon. "They would have the most dreadful damnation who led their flock to hell, as was the case with most ministers." Zealous Revivalists, who stopped short of Separation, shared the same condemnation. A Plainfield Separate thus threatens the Rev. Eleazer Wheelock for expressing disapprobation of some of their practices:—

"Yet all this never went so near my soul as it does to see and hear the blessed works and ways of the glorious God called errors and delusions of the Devil. Do you think you are out of danger of committing an unpardonable sin against the Holy Ghost? It would not surprise me much to hear that God had opened the flood-gates of his wrath and let out the horrors of conscience on you, and many more of your party who deny the truth, so that you should die in great despair, as Judas and Sapphira did."

Still fiercer denunciations were launched against the ecclesiastic Establishment of Connecticut. Its method was that of Pope and Papists. Its Councils exalted themselves above God and His Word. The investigating Consociation at Scotland met "to receive the Devil's

trumpety against God's children." "I know as perfectly," says Solomon Paine, "that this Established Worship is *idolatry*, as I do that Nebuchadnezzar's or Jeroboam's was, and it is no more of a question with me whether I ought to give what they demand to support it, than it is whether Israel ought to give to support Jeroboam's priests which he made for his calves." This extreme severity of judgment, this sweeping condemnation of all outside their immediate circle, cost the Separates many adherents. Many earnest Christians who lamented the abuses within the churches, and might have joined with them in promoting a *work of reformation*, refused to enlist in a warfare of *indiscriminate extermination*. The more moderate and reasonable of the Revival party remained in the churches, striving gradually to root out and overcome existing evils, and thus the Separates lost an important element that would have given strength and stability to their movement.

But it was when turned upon themselves that the "key of knowledge" did the greatest injury. "Absolute certainty" of the spiritual condition of another on admission to church membership, did not prevent extreme distrust afterward. If a brother or sister did not feel a positive interflowing of sympathy and affection with some particular person, some hidden sin was the cause which must be sought out, detected, confessed and brought to judgment before they could commune together at the Lord's table. Every church member considered himself his brother's keeper. The most trivial derelictions from duty were noted and reported, and espionage and tale-bearing encouraged as if they were cardinal virtues. No other cause so hastened the decay and disintegration of the Separate churches as this constant watching, fault-finding and disciplining. Probably one-half of these members, received only upon certain knowledge of their conversion and piety, were subjected to church discipline. Every man was at the mercy of the "inward actings" of his neighbor's soul. The Canterbury church, with all its glowing fervency and affection, had within three years suspended or cut off more than one-third of these perfectly known, fully assured disciples. The brothers, John and Ebenezer Cleveland, expelled from Yale College for fidelity to this church, were both cast out from it for presuming to question its infallibility. It happened thus :—

A fast was appointed, June 14, 1749, because of the drought, mortal sickness and abounding iniquity, at which time Ebenezer Cleveland took occasion to hand in a paper, stating "That he had long labored under great trials by reason of certain erroneous opinions which he believed were held by certain members of the church, but had feared to declare them lest he should excite displeasure, but since God had put

it into their hearts to set apart this day to unbind the burthened ones, he would come with his burthen and lay open his mind by asking if they held certain opinions contained in thirteen specific questions, praying that they might be delivered from such erroneous tenets, and declaring that until this difficulty was removed he must subscribe himself their aggrieved brother." This letter fell like a bombshell upon the assembled brethren. That several of these erroneous tenets were actually held by the church was abundantly proved afterward from the pastor's own sermons, but instead of admitting that such a thing could be possible, or that by some unguarded expressions they had given occasion for mis judgment, they broke out into cries and tears, "that a dear brother who had so often refreshed their souls should come in the very language of the opposing world against them." As the answering of the questions as they stood would lead to strife and debate contrary to the rule of fasting, the church considered his fault, and voted, "That his bringing these things into ye church in such a manner was contrary to ye word and Spirit of God, and that the church was forbid to answer them that day." And when they went on with the work of the day, and the pastor solemnly prayed, "Lord, convince Brother Ebenezer Cleveland of his sin in that he hath brought this against the face of thy Word and Spirit"—that irascible brother was so overcome by the injustice of his treatment as to exclaim, "That's a lie!" in a loud voice.

This complicated offence necessitated immediate and stringent discipline. Brothers Elisha and Solomon Paine "told him wherein he had trespassed, and endeavored to offer light, which he refusing to hear by breaking in upon them with loud speeches," they prayed over him with Deacon Boswell, "till they found their hearts inflamed with a divine love to that dear wounded brother, and then, with a spirit of meekness, told him his fault, inviting him in the bowels of love to repent and return," but he, though willing to reflect upon himself for rashness of temper and improper interruption of worship, justified his presentation of the paper, and declared, "that he held the same mind yet as to facts." The "violence of his temptation" preventing him from listening to arguments, Solomon Paine attempted to reach him by writing, showing him, that it was not simply the matter but the manner of the accusation that was offensive, craftily accusing in an obscure manner and implying that the church actually held these errors without first taking the proper Gospel steps to convince and reclaim it. The true ground of his trials, he alleged, was not that the church held errors, but in his own "casting away or denying the Key of Knowledge which Christ gave to his church, i. e., their knowledge to act under the present teaching, agency and government of the Holy



Ghost." That this attempt to discover the sentiments of the church was a legitimate use of the *particular key* given to the offender apparently never occurred to Mr. Paine and the brethren, and failing in all efforts to bring him to repentance, they unanimously voted him, "under censure by the Word and Spirit of God, and admonished him of the evil and danger of leaning to his own understanding, denying the power of godliness, and of going to preach under the influence of that spirit of the Beast which all the world wandered after, and hath cast down many strong men wounded." Mr. John Cleveland, settled as pastor in Ipswich, then came to the relief of his brother in a very large letter, proving from Mr. Paine's own words that he held many of the tenets in question, and severely criticising both the spirit and form of the censure, whereupon he was, with very little ceremony, "cast out of the church." The offending Ebenezer, after continuing two or three years "as a heathen man and a publican," was restored to fellowship. His violent temper, and opposition to the errors which the superior education of himself and his brother had detected, carried him on in hostility and apostacy till he was "so awfully left of God as to accuse the church of blasphemy and horrible errors." After earnest prayer and wearisome conflict "his lovely soul was at length set at liberty," and upon confessing to God and the church his dreadful sins and the root of bitterness which had worried him, he was joyfully taken back to its arms and heart, "without further confession as to the matters of fact for which he was censured." The doubtful points occasioning this great rupture and difficulty, were this very pretension of absolute knowledge, certain irregularities in admitting members, ordaining ministers and holding councils, and "the accursed practice of women's speaking in public."

In the majority of cases the result was less happy, and after sufficient delay the church would be forced to proceed to the last dread act of excommunication. Some excellent brethren, for reasons more or less weighty, were thus formally cut off. The church, "gathered together in the name of the Lord Jesus and in the power of the Holy Spirit," unanimously declared, "That such had rejected the Kingdom of Christ and chosen the kingdom of darkness, and therefore, by the command of Christ and the obedient act of the church, were delivered unto Satan for the distruction of the flesh, and all company with them as brethren forbidden." "And when the awful sentence was pronounced, the Holy Ghost fell with power and majesty, witnessing to ye word that it was bound in Heaven, ye brethren lifting up heart and hand as the heart of one man, witnessing their Amen to ye witness of ye Holy Spirit."

A somewhat amusing instance of this mischievous intermeddling in South Killingly, excluded an excellent deacon from church fellowship

under the flagrant charge, That having lately buried his wife, "he had backslidden from God and kept company with a carnal young woman and courted her, and on that account went on Sabbath day night, and such sircomstances attending as gave grate cause to ye enemy to blasfeam, and made declaration of his union to her on ye Lord's day before the Assembly, to the grate greaf of many and ye turning of ye lame out of the way"—for which the church, "with uplifted hands to Heaven, declared him to be to them as an heathen man and a publican." The aggrieved deacon, unable to find justice or mercy at home, vindicated his conduct and motives before Solomon Paine as an "inbassinder of Jesus Christ and his father in the Gospel," declaring:—

That, though a backsliding creature in general, yet, at the time specified; he stood in his lot, both in private communion and public improvement; that if by the disparaging epithet applied to the young woman in question, they meant that she was an open profane, scandalous opposer of ye works and ways of God, it was utterly false, and nobody had ever heard that she was accounted such a person, and while attending upon his wife in her last sickness she had manifested a tender conscience, a teachable mind and a regard for the work, ways and power of God; but if they meant she was in a state of nature and void of grace, it was not a point for them to settle, and he believed she was converted. The pastor had urged that it was inexpedient to be in pursuit of a wife so soon after the former was dead, but the Scripture taught, That if the husband was dead, the woman was loosed by law, and he thought it was much the same with the man. God hath said, 'It is not good for man to be alone.' Where there is a true united love mutually concurring in ye minds of ye two parties for any to say such a covenant is not suitable is to be wise above what was written. As to his going to see that person on Sabbath day night, while he had a clear conscience before God in ye errand he went on and the matter and manner of performing it, as to the *timing* of it—his inconsiderately taking that time which, he held, belonged to the Sabbath, without considering the evil consequences thereof—he was wrong, and had confessed it before the church, and would freely confess it at the feet of his fellow creatures. That this frank confession and the declaration of his intended union, which he felt constrained to make upon the Lord's day before the congregation, should have caused such offence and scandal, prejudicing the minds of many and wounding the cause of God, was very unexpected and unaccountable to the simple-hearted deacon, who was ready to make concessions in every circumstance wherein he conceived he had gone out of the way. But all his excuses failed to satisfy the church or still the clamor raised against him, and 'grieved, wounded and oppressed, deprived of the outward benefits of ye ordinances of ye Gospel and ye fellowship of Christians,' he besought the wise Solomon 'to way these things in ye ballenge of the Sanctuary,' and advise as to further procedure.

The result of this pathetic appeal is not recorded, but it may be hoped that the injured deacon was restored to his former standing. The above are but specimens of the mischievous effects of the injudicious application of "the key of knowledge." Had it been plucked from the Tree of Knowledge with Eve's famous apple, it could scarcely have wrought greater discord and confusion.

Another cause of failure was the disreputable character of many of the Separates. Their movement reached the lower stratum of society,

stirred up and excited its most inflammatory and revolutionary elements. Vagaries and fanaticisms now finding vent in innumerable "isms," were concentrated in this one body. It took in the lowest and most ignorant in an age of comparative coarseness and barbarism. While the leaders and many of the adherents of the Separates were persons of character and standing, the rank and file were filled up from the lower classes. All that from any cause were dissatisfied with the existing churches or civil government joined with the Separates. Compulsory rate-paying and church attendance brought them many followers, nor did possession of the key of knowledge keep out from their churches many unworthy members. The "inward actings of their own souls" seldom inclined them to reject any one who expressed hostility to the church establishment and Saybrook Platform. Many lawless, turbulent and disorderly spirits were thus received into church membership who could not be kept in check by all their stringency of discipline. These loosely-organized churches, with no fixed standard of discipline and no authority higher than themselves to appeal to, found it wholly impossible to maintain order and decency. Their members were guilty of open and scandalous offences, and attempts at discipline but led to more confusion and anarchy. The most pitiful cries for help were sent to the Paines and other Separate leaders. The reconstructed, purified, perfect churches were cast into the furnace of affliction and trial. "Wolves, bears and the boar of the wilderness were rending the lambs to pieces." "The Devil had come down with great rage, devouring saints and sinners, seducing and leading astray in droves." A Windham Separate went about the country "with a proclamation of liberty and an opening of the latter day glory, exclaiming against the legal bondage of praying every night and morning in families, whether persons felt a spirit of prayer or not; declaring that if they had not a spirit of prayer, God did not then call them to pray; and so of other duties." Others in Windham, still more advanced, "asserted that they had passed the first resurrection and were become perfect and immortal; and one of them declared that he was Christ." A Canterbury Separate had it revealed to him by the Spirit that a certain single woman would become his wife, though he had then a wife and children, and persisted in this delusion in spite of church discipline and excommunication, till his wife and two children died under circumstances so suspicious as to leave little doubt of his own complicity therein, though he was acquitted upon trial before Court for lack of sufficient evidence. The parties most concerned in this scandalous affair were cut off from the church, together with their relatives, "who had shown a covering spirit and kept back part

of the truth when under oath." In Voluntown, "the unwearied adversary of Zion" not only incited some in the church by delusive visions and revelations "to overhaling baptism and nullifying marriage, but also to overhale church discipline and ordinations." Even the orderly Brunswick church did not escape demoniac visitation. Blunt John Palmer writes to Solomon Paine, "That Joshua, son of Capt. Lemuel Bishop, is possest with an unclean spirit, full of rage, threatening the deth of his pearants and his wife." The distressed parents had appealed to the church and their dear brother Solomon Paine, to come to their house and hold a day of fasting and prayer on account of this son. The church heard and opened the case and spread it before the Lord, and found they were called to attend a fast at Captain Bishop's, whereupon their pastor sent report of their distress and mutual desires to Brother Paine, wishing him to understand, "that when I say it is the desire of the church, I have *greater witness* than that of the church." The infant churches in Chestnut Hill and Thompson were quickly rent asunder by intestine quarrels; those in Ashford, Woodstock and Windham were torn in pieces and utterly annihilated. Earnest and devoted Christians who had aided in the Separate movement as a new dispensation of religious freedom and purity were amazed and overwhelmed by these disgraceful manifestations. Many could exclaim like Elizabeth Chandler of Woodstock, when her soul was plunged under grief at the disruption of the church in her neighborhood:—"I would not write a line counter to y<sup>e</sup> work of God if I knew where it was, but I have got so bewildered and sunk that I can't tell where the work of God is."

The Separate churches were also weakened by the spread of Baptist sentiments. Previous to the Revival, these views had scarcely gained a hearing save in the regions bordering upon Rhode Island, but now they were widely promulgated and often accepted. Great sympathy existed between the Baptists and Separates. Agreeing mainly in the manner of religious worship, in matters of doctrine and discipline, in opposition to the church establishment and compulsory rate paying, the only essential point of difference was the mode and subjects of Baptism. For a time, this difference was no bar to co-operation and fellowship. The Paines, Stevens and Marsh labored among the Baptist churches, and "lively" Baptist exhorters and elders were welcomed in Separate pulpits. Many were converted through this interchange of labor, and so great were the love and sympathy between the two bodies that attempts were made to walk together in mutual church communion and fellowship. But soon difficulties arose. The Baptists were unwilling to commune with those they deemed unbaptized, and the Separates, who held the Abrahamic Covenant as the very foundation



of their faith, could not consent to re-baptize those sprinkled in infancy. Solomon Paine, after the happy resolution of his own doubts upon that point, was exceedingly zealous in opposition to what he called Ana-baptism. After much jarring and bickering a council was called at Exeter, Rhode Island, May 23, 1753, "to settle the terms of communion respecting difference of opinion as to mode and subjects of water baptism," and unite the Baptist and Separate churches in Christian fellowship and association. Twenty-seven churches answered to this call. Canterbury and Plainfield churches were not present, but sent excuses by Elders Paine and Stevens. After three days' conference it was agreed, "That if any baptized by sprinkling or in infancy and belonging to a Congregational church, desired baptism by plunging and went to a Baptist elder and was immersed; or, if a brother had his child baptized, neither should be censurable." Open communion was formally established. The moderator of the council declared, "That all the churches of this body are one church; that the words *dip* and *sprinkle* shall cease, and *baptize* be only used." This settlement proved satisfactory to neither party. No real union was effected and the difficulties increased. When those baptized in infancy were led down into the water, Separates refused to witness it because in their view they were already baptized, and to repeat it would be taking the sacred name in vain. When an elder sprinkled infants, "contrary to the Word and Spirit of God," the Baptists felt a like difficulty. Hard feelings, debate and contention resulted, and edification was marred instead of promoted by this attempt at "mixed communion." The Canterbury and Plainfield churches refusing to concur in the acts of the Exeter council, Elder Babcock of Westerly refused to act with Solomon Paine in an ordination at Stonington, and for giving his reasons to the latter church, the Canterbury church entered process against him as a transgressor. So great was the jangle, that Paine joined with Babcock in calling a general meeting of Separate and Baptist churches, "to search into these matters and effect a gospel settlement." Elders and brethren from twenty-four churches in Connecticut, eight in Massachusetts, seven from Rhode Island, and one from Long Island, accordingly met in Stonington, May 29, 1754, "to hear the controversy between Baptists and Congregationalists." After long and tedious debate, union was found impracticable. Solomon Paine attributed the breach "to bad temper and conduct in the Baptists," but his keener-sighted brother "gave in his mind, that the difficulty sprung from the nature of opposite principles." Either one party sinned in making infants the subject of baptism, or the other, in cutting them off. To himself it was clear, "that infants were once the subjects to be sealed with the seal of Abraham's faith . . . that there was but one covenant of grace

and that had Abraham's seed in it," and if we "allow a person to have Abraham's faith, why not his privilege." If God had "cut off infants by forbidding water to be put on them," they should "never tolerate the practice of putting it on; but if not, let none dare to forbid it, but do it in proper office and time."

Convinced by these arguments, the main body of the Separates, "declared non-communion with such as professed to have light against infant baptism." Some rejected Believer's Baptism "as against both law and Gospel." This decision greatly affected the relation between the two bodies. From allies they had become rivals. The Baptists were now able to promulgate their distinctive principles with more freedom and force, and gained many proselytes. In many towns, a bitter partizan spirit was developed. In Plainfield, where the Separates had the ascendancy, an attempt was made to take some town action concerning Baptists, but the only result was to add to their numbers. Many Separates, not favored like Solomon Paine with especial revelations, embraced Baptist sentiments and united with these churches. Some churches which retained the practice of mixed communion became in time wholly Baptist. The question of Baptism proved a potent element of discord in the Separate churches, inciting bitter conflict and animosities, diminishing their strength and hastening their dissolution.

Against these irregular, illegal, separated churches, weakened by internal dissensions and errors in doctrine and practice, were arraigned all the terrors of civil and ecclesiastic authority. The establishment and promotion of religion had been the chief end and care of the Government of Connecticut, and the settlement of worship made compulsory in every township. For its better regulation and perpetuity, the wisest and best men of the Colony had carefully perfected a system by which every community was united in religious association; every inhabitant made a member of a religious society, paying his proportion for the maintenance of public worship, while attendance upon this worship was secured by penal enactments. A collegiate school, established by Government, provided for the training of competent and orthodox ministers; County Associations enabled them to act with greater efficiency, and Consociations aided in regulating discipline and suppressing abuses. The institutions of religion were thus permanently established in every corner of Connecticut, and every family and individual brought within their influence. A more beautiful and effective system, its founders believed, could not have been devised, nor one better fitted to secure the highest good of the communities. Nothing apparently was lacking to its triumphant success but—the consent of the persons embraced in it. That any number of persons should object

to this admirable arrangement was a new evidence of natural corruption and total depravity. That any should compare it with the false, corrupt State religions of the Old World was profanation if not blasphemy. Persons unable to see the beauties and excellencies of this system were clearly unfit to govern themselves in religious matters. The rulers in church and state honestly believed that the religious interests of the communities demanded the maintenance of the legal Establishment, and that they did God service in enforcing the laws against its opposers. The hostility, mistakes and excesses of the Separates were an "awful specimen," as was said to Plainfield, of their stringent need of this very religious system they so denounced. To intrust religious ordinances to such hands would be desecration and sacrilege. Thus reasoning, the supreme civil and ecclesiastic authorities used every means in their power to destroy and root out Separatism. Legislative Assembly, Judicial Courts and General Association alike condemned the Separates. As far as possible, the rights of citizenship were taken from them. No Separates were allowed to hold official positions. Such men as Obadiah Johnson and Thomas Stevens, Sen., old and respected citizens, fathers of the town, when chosen representatives by fair majorities in Canterbury and Plainfield, were "expelled out of their Legislature for being members and deacons in those Separate churches." Baptisms and marriages performed by their ordained ministers were pronounced illegal. Both Solomon Paine and Thomas Stevens were imprisoned in Windham jail for joining in marriage some of their own church members. And while every possible civil right was taken from them, every legal due was most rigorously extorted. As members of a stated religious society they were bound to support its stated religious worship. Baptists, Episcopalians and even Quakers could be indulged with Acts of Toleration, but for the disobedient and rebellious members of their own Established churches no exemption was allowed. The General Assembly expressly declared, "That those commonly called Presbyterians or Congregationalists should not take benefit by these acts ; and only such persons as had any distinguishing character by which they might be known from the Presbyterians, or Congregationalists, and from the Consociated churches established by the laws of the Colony, might expect its indulgence." The unhappy Separates were thus left at the mercy of rate collectors. Refusing to pay, their goods were forcibly levied, and though their value often far exceeded the amount assessed, no overplus was returned. From Obadiah Johnson were taken, in successive years—"a yoke of oxen, a good cow and calf, three good fat hogs, two good cows," for the support of Mr. Cogswell. In those days of poverty and scarcity, these extortions, together with what they chose to pay for the support of

their own worship, bore very heavily upon the lower classes, and often caused much suffering. Instances of special cruelty and barbarism were not lacking, when the poor man's only cow and the grain and meat laid up for winter sustenance were forcibly seized by the merciless collectors. When goods failed, the body was taken. Most disgraceful scenes occurred at these seizures of goods and persons. The maddened Separates resisted with tongue and fist, refused to walk or ride to the prison, and held by main force on horseback would often be carried there, "crying and screaming till the blood ran out of their mouths." The story of their imprisonment is best told in the following letters, "sent from Windham Prison" to the Assembly, by the good minister of Voluntown, Alexander Miller, his brother Peter, and Joseph Spalding of Plainfield:—

"Whereas, we are rendered incapable upon the account of sickness and imprisonment, of sending a petition, we take this opportunity of informing your Honors of the difficulties we have met with as to our outward man because we are constrained to observe and follow the dictates of our own conscience, agreeable to the Word of God, in matters of religion, looking upon it to be God's prerogative to order the affairs of his own worship. We are of that number who soberly dissented from the Church established by Conn. and though we have no design to act in contempt of any lawful authority, or to disturb any religious society, but only to worship God according to the rules he has given us in his Word in that way now called Separation, yet have we suffered the loss of much of our goods, particularly because we could not in conscience pay minister's rates, it appearing to us very contrary to the way that the Lord hath ordained even the present way in which ministry are maintained—Poor men's estates taken away and sold for less than a quarter of their value, and no overplus returned, as hath been the case of your Honor's poor informers; yea, poor men's cows taken when they had but one for the support of their families, and the children crying for milk and could get none, because the collector had taken their cow for minister's rates. Neither have they stopped here, though we have never resisted them, but when our goods could no longer suffice we were taken from our families and cast into prison, where some of us have lain above two months, far distant from our families, who are in very difficult circumstances. Yea! and here we must unavoidably lie the remainder of our days unless we consent to such methods for which we can see no warrant in God's Word. No! surely it never came into his mind, neither hath he commanded that it should be so, that the Gospel of Peace should be so maintained; he hath told his ministers how they shall have their maintenance, but not a word of imprisoning men for refusing to maintain them, surely the best things corrupted form the worst. And now, we pray you to take notice of our difficulties, and grant us relief from bondage that we may enjoy the privileges other dissenters enjoy.

*Windham Prison, May 13, 1752."*

No notice was taken of this representation, and the prisoners were kept in jail till the authorities thought proper to release them. Two years later, they again presented their case to the Assembly:—

"We, whose names are subscribed, because we could not in conscience pay minister's salary, which we find neither precept nor example for in the Word of God, as we understand the same, and after we had once and again suffered the loss of much of our substance, being taken from us by collectors, our bodies were taken . . . and cast into prison in said Windham jail, where we were closely confined, some of us above twenty miles distant from our families—where we lay some of us ten weeks in most distressing circumstances as to



our bodies, and our families reduced or exposed to difficulties too affecting to your Honors to hear, could they be related. During which time we wrote to you to inform you of our difficulties even while we were in prison, but having been informed that said letter was never read publicly and cannot be found, offer this to you.

ALEXANDER MILLER.

PETER MILLER.

JOSEPH SPALDING.

JOSEPH WARREN."

Elisha Paine, after accepting the charge of a church at Bridgehampton, Long Island, and removing his family thither, was again made to feel the power of the Church Establishment in Connecticut. Returning to Canterbury for his household goods and provisions, he was arrested by Samuel Adams, collector, for rates due the society, and again imprisoned in Windham jail, greatly to his personal inconvenience and detriment and the suffering of his family. With his usual serenity and patience under such trials, he thus wrote to a friend:—

"I cannot but marvel to see how soon the children will forget the sword that drove their fathers into this land, and take hold of it as a jewel, and kill their grand-children therewith. O that men could see how far this is from Christ's rule; that all things that we would have others do unto us, that we should do even so unto them! I believe the same people that put this authority into the hands of Mr. Cogswell, their minister, to put me into prison for not paying him for preaching; would think it very hard for the church I belong to and am pastor of, if they should get the upper hand and tax and imprison him for not paying what he should be so unjustly taxed at; and yet I can see no other difference only because the power is in his hands, for I suppose he has heard me as often as I ever have him. Yet he hath taken by force from me two cows and one steer, and now my body held in prison, only because the power is in his hands."

After waiting vainly for some weeks for his release, Mr. Paine thus addressed the Canterbury assessors:—

"To you gentlemen, practitioners of the law, from your prisoner in Windham gaol, because his conscience will not let him pay a minister that is set up by the law of Connecticut, contrary to his conscience and consent.

The Roman Emperor was called Pontifex Maximus, because he presided over civil and ecclesiastical affairs; which is the first beast who persecuted the Christians that separated from their Established religion, which they called the holy religion of their forefathers; and by their law, fined, whipped, imprisoned and killed such as refused obedience thereto. We all own that the Pope or Papal throne is the second beast, because he is head of the ecclesiastical, and meddles with civil affairs; and for which he is also styled Pontifex Maximus or High Priest. He also compels all under him to submit to his worship, decrees and laws, by whips, fines, prisons, fire and faggots. Now what your prisoner requests of you, is a clear distinction between the Ecclesiastic Constitution of Connecticut, by which I am now held in prison, and the aforesaid two thrones or beasts, in the foundation, constitution and support thereof. For if by Scripture and reason you can show they do not all stand on the throne mentioned in Psalm xciv: 20, but that the latter is founded on the Rock Christ Jesus, I will confess my fault and soon clear myself of the prison. But if this Constitution hath its rise from *that throne*, then come forth to the help of the Lord against the mighty; for better is it to die for Christ, than to live against him.

From an old friend to this civil constitution, and long your prisoner,  
*Windham Jail, Dec. 11, 1752.*

ELISHA PAINE."

This keen suggestive query effected what entreaties and denunciations had previously failed to accomplish. Unable to make manifest

the "clear distinction" requested, the assessors replied by releasing him from prison. Memorials from Separates seldom gained such prompt attention. Their usual fate was utter neglect or unconditional rejection. The most affecting statements and moving appeals were unheeded. Petition after petition from individuals and churches was laid before the General Assembly only to receive "a negative from both Houses." The petition of the brothers Cleveland, praying that they might be restored to their privileges in College, was dismissed without any action upon it in either House. For a Separate to gain a suit at law was quite out of the question. Whatever the case, it was sure to be decided against him. Legal decisions took the meeting-houses from both the Canterbury and Plainfield Separates, though a majority of the *church* were Separate in the one town and a majority of the *town* in the other. A church majority in Canterbury were doomed to pay rates for the support of Mr. Cogswell, and a town majority in Plainfield compelled to satisfy the executions gained by Mr. Rowland. Injustice and oppression increased the opposition and bitterness of the Separates and aroused them to more united and determined efforts to gain a hearing. A most earnest and forcible petition, drawn up by Solomon Paine and signed by Caleb Hill, Aaron, Josiah, Ebenezer and Elisha Cleveland, Josiah and Daniel Brown, Thomas Bradford, William and Obadiah Johnson, Elisha Paine, Benjamin Smith, Samuel Parish and other respectable citizens, was laid before the Assembly, October, 1747, viz. :—

"We acknowledge that civil authority is ordained of God for to be a terror and to punish evil doers, and a praise to those who do well—but that no body, neither single person, nor church, nor even commonwealth has any just title to invade the civil rights and worldly goods of each other upon pretence of religion; that the contrary, viz., to make use of penal laws in this Colony to force men to believe or to profess to be of this or that religion or form of divine worship, or to force them to pay for the support of it when they can not in conscience receive it as religion, having no other ground for it than that the magistrates or major part of the people believe or profess so and say they have the Word of God to support it—is directly contrary to the Law of God and the Act of Toleration made in the reign of King William and maintained by our gracious King George; doth nourish the seeds of discord and war, and furnish men to hatred, rapine and slaughter. But notwithstanding all previous acts, the collectors of Canterbury society have taken of our estates to the value of four or five hundred pounds and still go on to take and sell at the sign-post; have stript several poor families of the creatures they had got for meat for their families, and left some of them without any meat for their poor children; selectmen have denied the privilege of freemen to those who did not attend the stated ministry, and there is no remedy by the law of the Colony against this dreadful oppression. Whereupon your memorialists, depending upon the faithfulness of the great and dreadful God, King of Kings and Lord of Lords, who hears the cry of the oppressed and has promised to relieve them, either mediately by making their rulers peace and their exactors righteousness, or immediately by his own awful and dreadful hand of vindictive justice, destroying cold and merciless oppressors; that they may not have a hand in pulling down so awful a judgment upon this land by their neglect to apply to your Honors under God, as those who are appointed and commanded by God to restrain

oppressors and let the oppressed go free, your memorialists pray your Honor's wise and compassionate interposition and commiseration of their distress and unbind their heavy burdens and let the oppressed go free by repealing all such laws as establish and countenance such God-provoking and common-wealth-common-friendship-and peace-ruining evil as oppression to be carried on under the pretence of maintaining religion."

This petition being summarily "dismissed by both Houses," in the following spring another was presented, signed by three hundred and thirty Separates in Windham and New London counties, showing :—

"That they could not without violence to their own consciences profess to be of any of the churches tolerated by law, but are determined to worship God in spirit and in truth, although that may be called Independent or Separate, and to honor the King and superiors and governors as sent by him, in yielding obedience to them in all civil matters; and yet they are all exposed either to make shipwreck of a good conscience, or to suffer by fines and imprisonments, and many of them have suffered for preaching the Gospel and other acts of divine service in obedience to the commands and by the power of God's Holy Spirit, and great quantity of their temporal goods with which they should serve God and Honor the King are taken from them to support that worship which they cannot in conscience uphold. And they, knowing that the doing of such violence endangers souls and also Commonwealth, and is threatened in the Word of God with public calamity or eternal punishment—'He shall have judgment without mercy that shewed no mercy.' 'For they shall be judged by the law of liberty'—and seeing the judgments of Almighty God are coming upon this land and the above-said imposition and oppression still carried on; whereupon your memorialists pray that your Honors may be the happy instrument of unbinding their burdens and enact universal liberty by repealing all those ecclesiastic laws that are or may be executed to the debarring of any in this Colony of the liberty granted by God and tolerated by our King, or forbid the execution of said laws."

Upon hearing this petition the Assembly resolved :—

"That inasmuch as said memorial is general and uncertain and points to no particular law the memorialists are aggrieved with, and contains invectives and unwarrantable expressions relating to laws and the authority of Government, it is dismissed."

Thus foiled in every effort, the Separates were left to wage unequal conflict, an undisciplined rabble against a powerful Government and established institutions. The one side fought for religious liberty; the other for religious order. All the might of law, learning, stability, respectability, time-honored associations, reason and common sense, were brought against the Separates. All the conserving forces of society rallied against them. Nothing was in their favor but some eternal principles of truth and justice, imperfectly understood by them, and mingled with much that was erroneous. What marvel that in such a war, the stronger party should triumph. Weakened by internal dissensions, without fixed aim or plan, the confused and bewildered Separates were unable to withstand the powerful forces arraigned against them. Under these adverse influences their numbers diminished; their strength and vigor declined. Zeal and spirituality were consumed in ignominious squabbles with rate-collectors. The "convicting Spirit of God was awfully withdrawn from the churches," so that few new members were gained while many

were lost to them. Earnest, conscientious brethren became Baptists; weak ones, wearied out with controversy and double rate-paying, relapsed to the standing churches; false ones progressed into heresy and infidelity. Yet in face of all these obstacles the majority remained steadfast, and after five years' silence again attempted to gain relief from the Assembly. A formal memorial from agents of more than twenty-three Separate congregations, declared:—

“April 16, 1753.

That we do carry on the worship of God as we in conscience think agreeable to the Word of God, and think it unequal to be compelled to support others. It is against our consciences that ministers' salaries be dependent on human laws. We pray for the benefit of the Toleration Act; we are imprisoned, our property is taken, from which burdens we pray to be released.”

Those signing this memorial in Windham County were John Fitch and Joseph Waldon of Windham, Thomas Stevens and Thomas Pierce of Plainfield, Solomon Paine and Obadiah Johnson of Canterbury, Edward Waldo and Samuel Bingham of Scotland, Alexander Miller and John Hinman of Voluntown, Samuel Wadsworth and John Eaton of Killingly—yet, though men of excellent character and position, their request was disregarded. Convinced of the uselessness of farther attempts to move the Colonial Government, the Separates were compelled to apply to the Throne of Great Britain. Twenty Separate churches adopted a memorial, stating that they were deprived of the benefit of the Toleration Act granted by the King to dissenters, and praying that they might be allowed to share in its privileges. This memorial, confirmed by legal evidence and the Colony seal affixed by Governor Fitch, was carried to England in 1756, by Messrs. Bliss Willoughby and Moses Morse, and first exhibited to the Deputation and Committee for the Dissenters. That body received the report with amazement, and could scarcely believe that the children of men who had fled from England to escape ecclesiastic tyranny should thus restrict the liberties of others; that *Dissenters* from the *Church Establishment of Connecticut* should be denied the privileges granted to those in *Great Britain*. This denial they believed a plain violation of the Charter rights of the memorialists, and feared that should their petition be presented to the King it would endanger the Charter of Connecticut. The agents were therefore advised to return home without carrying the matter farther, and a letter was written by Dr. Avery, chairman of the committee, severely censuring the conduct of the Government. Governor Fitch attempted to excuse it by recounting the follies and extravagances of the Separates, to which Avery replied, that civil penalties were not the appropriate remedy for spiritual disorders, and advised the sufferers to commence a civil process for the establishment of their rights, appealing it to England for final decision. This



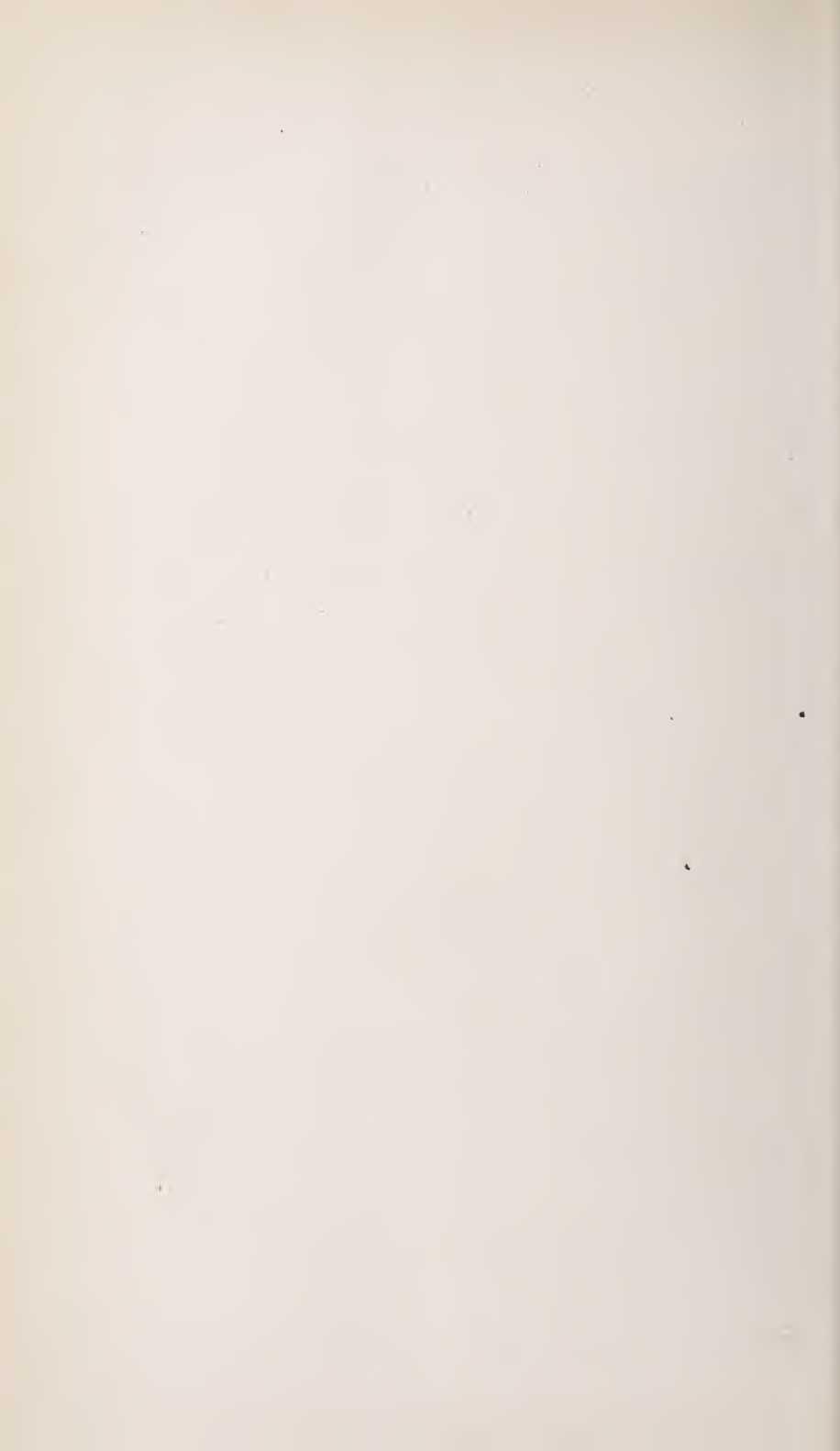
unfavorable judgment of English Dissenters, and the disturbed condition of public affairs somewhat changed the policy of Government. With a foreign war waging, it had less time and strength for domestic broils, and its extreme severity towards the Separates slightly relaxed. The first Separate petition to gain a favorable hearing was from South Killingly. These brethren, after enduring "difficulties too affecting to be fully related, and not fit to be named by such as profess Christianity," procured "a considerably unanimous" discharge from rate-paying from the society with which they were connected, in 1755. Upon persistently representing to the Assembly "that their design was not to indulge idleness or immorality, but to maintain the worship of God among themselves by a free liberality," they were released from the burdens under which they had long labored, and freed and prohibited from paying any rates in said society, and also from voting—and after this date exemption from rate-paying under favorable combinations was not impossible of attainment.

This modification of treatment came too late to save the Separates from decay and dissolution. Their most prominent leaders were already gone; their churches greatly weakened and demoralized. The Moses, who they hoped would have led them from the House of Bondage—their beloved father, Elisha Paine—had removed to Long Island. The "beloved brother and pastor, Solomon Paine,\* a faithful pastor of the church in Canterbury, having finished his minister's work, after twelve days' sickness, fell asleep in the Lord, October 25, 1754." The ardent and devoted Stevens, yielding to the entreaty of young men of his flock to go out with them as chaplain in the campaign of 1755, contracted disease, and only returned home to die at his father's house. Much of the vigor and vitality of the Separate movement passed away with these leaders. The churches lingered on but their aggressive power was gone. Still blindly battering the churches and church establishment, their blows were unheeded, their efforts ineffectual. Soured by failure and persecution, the remaining Separates grew more violent, factious and impracticable. While some among them continued good and orderly citizens, maintaining their Separate worship and opposition to the Government with sobriety and decency—a far greater proportion became outcasts and Pariahs, "wild Separates" and

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\* Letters and documents left by this faithful pastor and earnest Christian laborer, have furnished many of the facts comprised in this sketch of the Separates. A short time before his death he published, "A Short View of the Constitution of the Church of Christ, and the Difference between it and the Church established in Connecticut," in a pamphlet of seventy pages, now almost unattainable. This work, the Mansfield Covenant, and an Historical Narrative and Declaration, adopted in 1781—are believed to be the only published utterances of the Windham County Separates now in existence.

schismatics ; their hand against every man and every man's hand against them. To all outward appearance, their "movement" was an utter failure. Pioneers in the great battle for religious freedom in Connecticut, they perished by the way without even one glimpse of the Promised Land, and nearly twice forty years passed before the principles for which they had struggled were established. The fate of the Separates was in literal accordance with the Saviour's parable. In attempting to force new wine into old bottles, the bottles were marred and the wine perished.



## BOOK IV. 1745-60.

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### I.

#### WOODSTOCK'S REVOLT. CONTEST BETWEEN MASSACHUSETTS AND CONNECTICUT.

**W**HILE neighboring towns in Windham County were absorbed in ecclesiastic controversies and operations, Woodstock was agitating the question of a transfer of civil allegiance. Her subjection to the jurisdiction of Massachusetts was in many respects inconvenient and burdensome. That Province was now "groaning under sore calamities"—demoralized currency, heavy debt, foreign and domestic quarrels—and the interests and sympathies of the people drew them strongly to Connecticut. Their taxes would be lighter; their privileges greater. A new generation was now in public life, less personally connected with the mother colony. The death of Colonel Chandler severed the strongest tie that bound Woodstock to Massachusetts. The Rev. Mr. Stiles warmly favored annexation to Connecticut, and was ever ready to remind his people of the burthens laid upon them, as part of this afflicted Province. That the grant of the King gave Woodstock territory to Connecticut was admitted by all parties, although an agreement between the Colonies had yielded it to Massachusetts. The Woodstock people maintained that this agreement, which had never been confirmed by the King, was invalid; that a title of land could be annulled or transferred only by the power which had granted it, and that they were thus within Connecticut limits, and entitled to the privileges of its Government. A report that the other "Indented towns" were preparing to assert their right to the Charter privileges of Connecticut, incited them to action, and after much preparatory discussion the question was brought before the town, March 31, 1737, by asking:—

"If a person should be chosen to join those chosen by Suffield, Enfield and Somers, in trying to get off to Connecticut.' A large majority voted in the affirmative, and chose Colonel William Chandler to lay the affair before the General Assembly of Connecticut. Fourteen persons dissented, 'as not likely to prove successful and costing more expense.'"

The committee from the Indented towns appeared before the Assembly in May, representing that said towns were within the bounds



granted by royal charter to Connecticut, and humbly claiming the rights and privileges of members of its corporation—

I. Because Commissioners could not transfer or alter the jurisdiction of lands granted by royal charter, and that the doing of the same is an infringement on the rights of the subject.

II. Because the stipulation and settlement were made without the consent and to the great hurt and detriment of the memorialists."

The Assembly thereupon appointed Messrs. Jonathan Trumbull, John Bulkley, Benjamin Hall and Roger Wolcott, to confer with gentlemen to be appointed for this purpose by Massachusetts. The report that Connecticut had consented to consider the matter inspired Woodstock with fresh courage, and it unanimously voted, "To go on with its efforts." Colonel William Chandler was appointed, "To prefer said affair to the Province; Thomas Chapdler and Henry Bowen to go on with the Connecticut movement, and in the most moving and effectual manner lay their case before that Colony, and if not succeeding there, send to ye Great Court of England." Colonel Chandler's mission was unsuccessful. Massachusetts was indignant at the projected secession, and refused to appoint gentlemen, or give the affair the least consideration. It was evident that the rebellious towns would not be released without a struggle. With greater earnestness, they adjured Connecticut to consider their case, showing:—

"That we have a just right to the privileges and liberties of that Government, the agreement of 1713 notwithstanding—which we can in no measure apprehend to be sufficient to disfranchise and cut us off from our aforesaid privileges without the royal order or confirmation. Wherefore as we humbly conceive it to be our right to be and belong to this Government and that it would be no ways inconsistent with the common interest of this Government, we humbly pray you to declare in favor of our rights in this matter, and to receive as under the laws and privileges of this Government. Oct., 1747."

Connecticut delaying to declare in their favor, and Massachusetts curtly resolving, "That this Court will not appoint commissioners in behalf of the Province," the persistent committee renewed and repeated their motion, most earnestly entreating the Honorable Assembly:—

"To declare in favor of our rights (which we by no means give up) in the matter aforesaid and receive us under protection . . . by incorporating the aforesaid plantations into towns, according to the charter constitution of this Government, or otherwise grant relief in the premises as your Honors in your great wisdom and goodness shall think fit speedily to effect the same, that so your Honors' memorialists may not have any farther cause of uneasiness or complaint on said offence.

THOMAS CHANDLER.  
HENRY BOWEN.  
JOSEPH LEAVETT."

May 12, 1748.

The gentlemen previously appointed were continued as commissioners to meet and settle this affair, and reported in favor of the memorialists. Ample evidence had been adduced to prove that the Indented towns were in truth and fact south of Massachusetts' lawful southern boundary line. Her title was based solely upon the agreement of 1713,

which had never received royal confirmation. The question was brought before the Assembly, May, 1749, and seriously considered. To set aside a formal compact and agreement with a sister colony was a very grave matter and might involve them in serious difficulty. Connecticut had hitherto stood squarely by her unequal bargain and faithfully resisted the frantic efforts of Killingly to gain possession of parts of her lawful territory confirmed by it to non-resident owners—but now, when four important towns strenuously asserted their right to her jurisdiction, she wavered. For the territory thus given up, she had received an insufficient equivalent; for the jurisdiction, no equivalent whatever. After mature deliberation, she thus decided:—

“That the agreement was made through mistake and that the Government received no equivalent for the jurisdiction over those towns, and that as the same was partly executory it was never fully completed and carried into execution, nor was it ever established by the royal confirmation, and therefore, although it was approved by the respective General Assemblies of both Governments—yet, as to jurisdiction more especially, it must be looked upon as null and void. Whereupon this Assembly is of opinion, that as it never has, so it never ought to receive the royal confirmation and that as the Government could not give up, or exchange, or alter their jurisdiction, so the said agreement, so far as it respects jurisdiction, is void, and thereupon this Assembly do declare, that all the said inhabitants which lie south of the line fixed by the Massachusetts Charter are within and have right to the privileges of this Government, the aforesaid agreement notwithstanding—and if it is necessary that measures be taken to ascertain about the line, Jonathan Trumbull, John Bulkley, Elisha Williams and Joseph Fowler are appointed to join with commissioners that may be appointed by Massachusetts to ascertain and affix line according to charters, and in case Massachusetts refuses, to prepare and state the case and send it to our agent in Great Britain and direct him to petition his Majesty to appoint commissioners to run and ascertain the division line.”

The inhabitants of Woodstock were greatly elated at the success of their efforts, and hastened to organize as a Connecticut township. Justice James Bicknell of Ashford, at the request of Henry Bowen and others, issued a warrant warning “the inhabitants of Woodstock in the county of Windham” to meet for the choice of proper town officers, of which they were destitute. This “notable meeting” was held in the “first meeting house,” on Woodstock Hill, at ten A. M., Friday, July 28, 1749, O. S. Residents from all parts of Woodstock were present and many from neighboring towns. The venerable Joseph Leavens of Killingly, an honored son of Woodstock, called the meeting to order—but before entering upon business, a protest was presented. Amid the general exultation, there were still some who clung to the old Bay Colony. The Paysons, who had fought so bravely for the Province, Samuel Chandler and other sons of first settlers, and Zebulon Dodge, who had recently removed from Massachusetts—thus expressed their sentiments:—

“To the inhabitants of the town of Woodstock, this day assembled in town-meeting by virtue of a warrant from James Bicknell, Esq., a justice of the peace for the county of Windham in the Colony of Connecticut, in order to

choose town officers agreeable to the laws of that Colony. We, the inhabitants and freeholders in said town, apprehending that said meeting is wholly unlawful and has a tendency to stir up the greatest confusion and utmost disorder if not Rebellion, as at present we are not able to set off to that Colony—although some attempts have been made in order to said town being under the jurisdiction of Connecticut—and as we were originally settled by the Government of Massachusetts Bay and have always hitherto been supported and defended by them, and as in the month of March last, agreeable to the laws of the Province, all town officers were chosen as in fact. For these reasons and many others that may be given, we can't but protest, and we do, hereby, for ourselves absolutely protest against all your proceedings by virtue of said warrant, and by virtue of any other warrant that may be obtained from any authority of that Colony for that purpose until the affair be settled by those respective Governments, or by some proper, lawful and superior authority.

Samuel Chandler.	Joseph Wright.	Nathan Payson.
John Payson.	Zebulon Dodge.	Asa Payson.
John Frizzell.	Jonathan Payson.	Joseph Griggs."

This paper being read and somewhat discussed, it was then put to vote by the moderator, "Whether they would take any further notice of said paper," and it passed in the negative. John May was then chosen moderator; Henry Bowen, town-clerk and first selectman; Isaac Johnson, second; Jabez Lyon, third; Abraham Perrin, fourth; John May, fifth; Andrew Durkee and Ebenezer Paine, constables; Benjamin Bugbee and Samuel Child, grand-jurors, and all were sworn into office by Justice Leavens. It was then proposed that a number of suitable persons should take the freeman's oath agreeably to the laws of the Colony, whereupon the selectmen approved and recommended William and Daniel Lyon, John Morse, Ephraim and Benjamin Child, Henry Bowen, Thomas Chandler, Daniel Paine and Nathaniel Johnson—unto whom the oath was administered by Ebenezer Holbrook of Pomfret. At the following town-meeting seventy-four freemen\* were admitted, and Thomas Chandler and Henry Bowen chosen representatives to the General Assembly of Connecticut. After sixty-three years' subjection to the Government of Massachusetts, Woodstock had thus triumphantly effected her own secession. No longer an *appended indentation*, but an integral part of her rightful Commonwealth, she was now organized under Connecticut laws and formally enrolled among Windham County townships.

Massachusetts was by no means disposed to submit to this loss

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\* FREEMEN ADMITTED.—John May, Isaac Johnson, Abraham Perrin, Caleb Lyon, Edward Morris, John Child, Jun., Benjamin Bugbee, Thomas Gould, William Child, Nehemiah May, Benjamin Roth, Joseph Chaffee, Jun., Ebenezer Smith, Samuel Child, Thomas Child, Daniel Child, Joseph Marcy, David Holmes, Jacob Lyon, William Chapman, John Peake, Jonathan Hammond, John Chamberlain, Pennel Bowen, Isaac Williams, David Bishop, Edward Ainsworth, Jacob Child, Joseph Peake, Andrew Durkee, Ebenezer Paine, Ephraim Manning, Timothy Hide, Thomas Bacon, Jun., Samuel Davis, Nathan Abbott, John Hutchins, Benjamin Frizzel, Thomas Fox, Joseph Williams, Nath. Johnson, Ephraim Child, Jun., Silas Bowen, Ebenezer Phillips, Joseph Chaffee, Ebenezer Corbin, Henry Child, Nehemiah Lyon, Stephen May, Ebenezer Smith, Benjamin Child, Jun., John Chaffee, Jun., John Goodell, Joseph Wright, Jun., Nath. Sanger, Jun., Richard Flynn, Amos Morse, Caleb May, Ezra Perrin, John Coates, Jedediah Morse, Zechariah Richardson, Joshua May, Nath. Child, Thomas Ormsbee, Joseph Abbott, Jesse Engbee, John Bishop, Jacob Mascraft, James Ledwith, Ephraim Hutchins, Samuel Harding, James Chaffee, James Marcy.



without a struggle. As soon as the disorderly, tumultuous proceedings in Woodstock and its refusal to submit to the jurisdictional power of the Province, were represented to its Government, a committee was appointed to take this affair under due consideration, and a spirited remonstrance forwarded to the Governor of Connecticut:—

“Respecting the inhabitants of Woodstock assembling together under pretence of a warrant from James Bicknell and choosing town officers under Connecticut law. Leavens, Holbrook and Bicknell, justices of Conn. there present exercised power unwarrantably. Report these extraordinary proceedings to you that you may have an opportunity of showing disapprobation, which may be the means of said inhabitants returning to their duty, and may prevent those great evils which must arise from a controverted jurisdiction and a confused exercise of the executive power of the two Governments. The Legislature of the Province is determined to encourage and support all proper officers in the regular use of their power over the inhabitants in Woodstock, and take such measures as shall compel them to their duty and preserve them in subjection and obedience to the laws and authority of this Government.

By order of Assembly. T. WILLARD, Secretary. Aug. 7, 1749.”

Undismayed by threats of coercion and violence, Governor Law in reply:—

“Entreats them to forbear any forcible attempts on that people who came from your Government, as did the biggest part of our northeast inhabitants, whose transplantation may not have altered the *suddenness* and *resolution* of their natural temper and disposition, whence I am fearful of the ill consequences of any sudden and forcible attempts, which I hope your Honors will prudently stay till a better understanding may be had. Our justices’ authority is limited to the county for which they are appointed, and Woodstock was never admitted to any of our counties, and if they do anything under color of our authority, when they have none, they must be responsible for their misdeeds.

As to the case itself, it seems plain to me, by the agreement of 1713, that the town of Woodstock which you granted was understood to be out of your bounds, seeing you granted an equivalent of land in your Government in exchange for it—but how this Government could give you an authority to govern any people out of your charter, though within ours, is difficult for me to conceive of. Yet so long as the people were easy and did submit to your Government and ours made no demand on them. it was well enough.

As for your Government being always in the right, it looks to me rather that Mr. Tomlinson’s charge upon you in his plea, That you were an overgrown Province and imposed on your neighbors, might have too much truth in it.

Notwithstanding, if Woodstock were content to remain in your Government who granted them their land, and *purchased* it for them when you found you had no right to grant it—I should be under no temptation to covet an enlargement of this by their being placed where God and the King had fixed the bounds of their habitation.

I remain your obedient humble servant,  
To T. Willard, Sec.”

JONATHAN LAW.

Indignant that Governor Law should “be pleased to express himself in language better fitted to increase than repair the breach,” Massachusetts took immediate measures to compel the revolted inhabitants to their duty and preserve them in subjection. Shortcomings in supporting schools had hitherto received indulgence, but now Woodstock was presented before the grand jurors of Worcester County “for having more than a hundred families and not supporting a grammar



school," and summoned by warrant to account for her remissness, but its authority was openly "contemned." A writ served by Benjamin Flagg, sheriff of Worcester County, occasioned a more serious collision. Constable Durkee apprehending that Flagg had no right to execute his writ in a Connecticut township, ordered a number of citizens assembled in Joseph Wright's public-house to assist him in releasing the prisoner, Seth Hodges, from the hands of the Massachusetts sheriff, "which they did in as peaceable and easy manner as they could." Notwithstanding their care, they were summoned before the grand jurors of Worcester County, "for committing a riot," and forced to pay heavily for lawyer's fees and traveling charges, which were considerably "allowed them" by the Connecticut Government. Flagg, himself, was arrested on complaint of Hodges—"that he did lay violent hands on him and in a turbulent manner draw him out of doors and hauled him into the street"—and being convicted by Justice Leavens, appealed to the Court of Windham County, which decided, "That the town of Woodstock was not within the jurisdiction of the Province of Massachusetts Bay, which said Flagg had alleged, and finds for the plaintiff." Other attempts of Massachusetts to exercise her wonted authority were equally unsuccessful; tax bills were quietly ignored; proclamations of Fast and Thanksgiving unheeded, and in a few months the new *regime* was fully established. A farther petition, at the September town-meeting, presented by thirteen persons, "absolutely protesting against all your proceedings that are agreeable to the tenor of a warning from the authority of Connecticut, inasmuch as we are not yet set off to that Colony"—received no notice. The protesting thirteen, forced to submit to the will of the majority, consoled themselves by disparaging criticisms upon the management of public affairs, and thus the Woodstock revolution was accomplished without bloodshed, and with less disturbance and violence than might have been expected from the "suddenness and resolution" attributed to its inhabitants.

The difference between the Governments claiming the town was less easily adjusted. Massachusetts, who for several causes "did not act in the matter with her usual spirit," sulkily refused all attempts at settlement. Commissioners from both Colonies met in Springfield, April, 1750, but could not even agree upon terms of negotiation. The Connecticut commissioners were empowered to run the line; those from Massachusetts were not thus empowered. Connecticut would only agree to settle the dividing line according to their respective charters, and then a joint application for his Majesty's confirmation; upon which reasonable requirement, says Governor Law—"our Northern gentlemen wrote a *Ne plus Ultra*." Failing in all attempts at settlement, both

Governments prepared to appeal to the Crown. The Massachusetts Assembly ordered, "That Thomas Fitch be appointed to state the case and prepare evidence relating to the dividend line, that the same may be sent to our agent in Great Britain." This agent, William Bullen, was also directed "To make humble representation to his Majesty against Connecticut for departing from agreement, and pray his Majesty's orders." Rhode Island, whose northern boundary line was also unsettled, now suggested to Connecticut "that they might reciprocally assist each other," and these two Colonies agreed to prosecute the case together, Connecticut paying expenses abroad. A committee was appointed to collect evidence, which reported, "that the dividend line was wrong from the outset; that the point selected by Woodward and Saffery for the head of Charles River was *four miles* south of the true head, and the stake on Wrentham Plain *seven miles* south of the most southerly part of Charles River, instead of *three* as prescribed by Massachusetts charter. This statement and other facts relating to the case were embodied in a petition and sent by the Colonies to their agents in England in 1753. Massachusetts, thereupon, ordered Thomas Chandler, Esq., "To prepare a survey and plan of the line, and forward the same to Mr. Bullen, as quick as the same can be conveniently done." Connecticut, in 1755, finding the matter still unsettled, appointed Roger Wolcott, Daniel Edwards and Thomas Chandler, a committee, "to prepare a survey and plan of the line run by the commissioners in 1713, of the indented towns, with proper evidences to show the mind and desire of said town to enjoy the privileges of this Government ever since the running said line, and prepare an answer to Mr. Bullen's petition, and convey the same to the Governor for his correction, by him to be forwarded to our agent at Great Britain [Dr. Benjamin Avery], as quick as the same can conveniently be done." Yet, with all their haste and pains, there is no evidence that the case was ever brought before the supreme authority. Hutchinson says, "That Bullen was ordered to exhibit complaint to the Crown, but by an unaccountable neglect it was never brought to a hearing." Trumbull affirms, "That Connecticut succeeded in maintaining its claims to jurisdiction,"—that is to say, Massachusetts *did not succeed* in securing her ejection. That the former Colony would have succeeded in maintaining her claim had she obtained a hearing is somewhat doubtful. The attorney-general, afterwards Lord Mansfield, when asked by Dr. Avery, "Whether the agreement respecting their common boundary line, made by Connecticut and Massachusetts in 1713, could be set aside by a committee appointed by the Crown"—replied:—

"I am of opinion that in settling the above bound, the Crown will *not* disturb the settlement of the two Provinces in 1713. I apprehend her Majesty

will confirm the agreement, which of itself is not binding on the Crown, but neither Province should be suffered to litigate such an amicable compromise of doubtful boundaries."

Probably had Lord Mansfield examined the evidence more closely, he would have seen that the boundary in question, so far from being *doubtful*, was admitted by Massachusetts herself to be erroneous and untenable. The prosecution of the French and Indian War and other weighty public matters, however, wholly absorbed the attention and energies of the Government, and made it impossible to gain a decision, so that Connecticut was able to retain her assumed jurisdiction. Massachusetts, in 1755, appointed another committee "to undertake the affair of the four towns which have withdrawn from this Government and put themselves under jurisdiction of Connecticut," but nothing was effected.

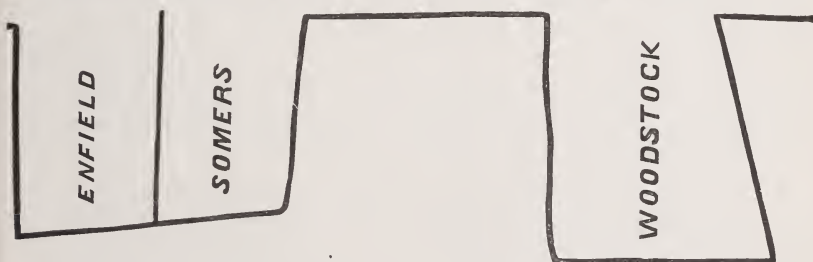
Connecticut's share in this transaction has been very severely censured by Massachusetts historians. Her plea, that the inhabitants of Woodstock had an inalienable right to her jurisdiction by charter, which acts of Legislature could not take from them, nor acts of inhabitants of 1713 take from those of 1749, is pronounced by Hutchinson a "feeble pretence." "The settlement of 1713 was a matter of public notoriety, though not presented to the King in form. Accounts of it were transmitted with records to Lords and Commons, and being tacitly acquiesced in, may be properly said to have received implied approbation,"—and he adds, "That it would at least have been decent in Connecticut to offer to return the equivalent she had received." Dr. Palfrey pronounces the transaction "as little creditable as any in Connecticut." Her Government made the most of the fact that the agreement of 1713 had received no royal sanction, and though Massachusetts, "naturally disinclined to lose the fruits of a bargain into which, at best, she had in a measure been coerced," refused her consent to the transfer of the Indented Towns, "Connecticut got the towns" and "kept the property which Massachusetts had paid to quiet the claim."

It must be admitted that Connecticut's conduct was not much to her credit. She ought never to have yielded an inch of this chartered territory, but maintained her own line and rights in spite of obstacles and opposition—especially to receive as equivalent, distant, wilderness land, which only brought her *six farthings* an acre. Consenting to a "bad bargain," she was bound in honor and good faith to abide by it. There is this to be said in her justification, that she long resisted every temptation; that she refused to take the land *south* of Woodward's and Saffery's line, unjustly appropriated by Massachusetts proprietors, and paid Kllingly an equivalent of good land in accessible neighborhoods; that

she never in any manner tampered with the Indented towns, nor made the least attempt to win them to her allegiance. That any other Government would have had the superhuman self denial and magnanimity to refuse to receive its own chartered territory when thrust into its hands by its lawful inhabitants and proprietors—is certainly very doubtful. However this may be, Connecticut yielded; fell back on her chartered rights and away from her agreement. Discreditable as was her conduct, it was perhaps no worse than her neighbor's—seizing a tract of land beyond her charter limits; refusing for seventy years even to consider the question of restitution; and when “coerced” at last, making but a shabby equivalent for such portions as she declined to relinquish. As for returning this equivalent, quite probably Connecticut would have offered it—had Massachusetts been cool enough to listen to conciliatory propositions.

The historian of Worcester County treats the matter with more candor and philosophy. Admitting that the Indented towns were clearly within Connecticut patent, he questions if they did fairly in revolting after all the pains and expense lavished upon them by Massachusetts, but consoles himself by the consideration; that, “be that as it may, by this revolt the line between the Colonies *became a straight line*”—a result which might have brought some balm to Massachusetts, had *maps* been more common in its Indentation period.

#### MASSACHUSETTS' SOUTHERN BOUNDARY LINE FROM 1713 TO 1715.



## II.

### VARIOUS TOWN MATTERS. CONTROVERSY WITH MR. STILES. CHURCH DIVISION.

THE first care of Woodstock after effecting her change of government was to order three new Connecticut law-books, that so her town affairs might be legally established and administered. New town-books were also procured and land-deeds duly recorded in them. A



meeting of the proprietors of the south half was held early in 1750, and measures again instituted for separating the town and proprietors' records, inconveniently "mixed" together. With other northern Windham County towns, Woodstock was now included in Plainfield Probate District, but as this was little more accessible than that of Worcester, complaint was made, and in 1752, a new district was formed comprising the towns of Woodstock, Pomfret, Ashford, Killingly, Mortlake and Union. Penuel Bowen was appointed clerk of this court, and kept its records in his dwelling-house on Woodstock Hill, so that both land and probate records were now within its own borders. Law-suits, to which Woodstock people were greatly addicted, were now transferred to the courts of Windham County. Penuel Bowen, Jonathan Payson, Samuel Bugbee and Joseph Heywood were licensed by Court in February, 1750, to keep houses of public entertainment. These arrangements being settled, town affairs required little legislation for several years. A special act in 1753, allowed swine "to run at large the year ensuing, being yoked, one week from the fifth day of April next until the last day of October next, as follows, viz.: the yoke to be once the length of the neck above, and half so long below, and the centre piece of the yoke to be three times in length, three times the thickness of the neck, and well ringed in the nose all the year." Attempts were made by both sections to secure a final settlement of their land. Thomas Chandler was commissioned by the south proprietors "to search for common land, and make report where it lies, how much, and what value." After two years' search, some land was found and sold, and the commission continued indefinitely. A meeting of the proprietors of the north half was held in the school-house, March 16, 1756. Captain John May was chosen moderator and clerk, and it was voted:—

"1. That the old or Great Cedar Swamp, so called, and two other pieces of land—one near Deacon Corbin's and one by Amos Broughton's—be sold to the best advantage for said proprietors . . . proceeds of the sale to be improved, from time to time, for the support of the gospel, provided said gospel be carried on according to the Congregational and Presbyterian Schemes. N. B. It means, to be improved in this place—saving so much as the charges that may arise for the surveys and sales of land and prosecuting trespassers.

2. Capt. Jabez Lyon, Capt. John May and Mr. Nath. Childs be the committee for prosecuting trespassers in the cedar swamp and commons.

3. That the committee do search out, measure and estimate the two remaining pieces of land as soon as convenient. Oath taken before y<sup>e</sup> worshipful Thomas Chandler."

Search and proposed sale were probably unsuccessful, as no action was reported by the committee.

Woodstock suffered severely in the prevailing epidemics of 1754-5. Mr. Stiles writes very touchingly of his two children—Sophia, "who

took the way of spirits uncumbered with flesh," and Abel, "who slipped away from the land of the dying to the land of the living." Captain William Chandler also died in 1754. Though living within the bounds of Thompson Parish, his business and social relations were all with Woodstock, and he was mourned by her as one of her most valued citizens. His widow, Jemima Bradbury—a descendant of Governors Dudley and Winthrop, and other distinguished Massachusetts families—survived him many years. She was a woman of superior natural abilities and unusual accomplishments, excelling not only in understanding of the doctrines of religion, but "in history, natural philosophy, and geography," and exerting great influence in the community. Her oldest son, Thomas Bradbury Chandler, became a convert to Episcopacy while in college, and after teaching school in Woodstock and studying at intervals with Dr. Johnson, went to England in 1751, where he was admitted into holy orders, and after his return, officiated as Church missionary in Elizabethtown, New Jersey. A service held by him in Woodstock in 1752, is said to have been attended by large numbers. His brothers, William and Lemuel, both died in 1756. Theophilus, appointed surveyor of Windham County in 1754, and Winthrop, distinguished for his skill in portrait-painting, remained in Woodstock. Their sister, Jemima, married Samuel McClellan of Worcester in 1757. Thomas Chandler, fifth son of Colonel John, was very active in civil and military affairs till his removal to Walpole, New Hampshire. The youngest son, Samuel, still remained on the original Chandler homestead.

The seventy-four persons who took the oath of allegiance to Connecticut, were mostly descendants from the first settlers of Woodstock. Thomas Fox, Ephraim Manning, Ebenezer Philips, Richard Flynn and Thomas Ormsbee were later immigrants. Abraham Skinner of Malden, and his son William, had also removed to Woodstock. Samuel McClellan removed to South Woodstock after his marriage, and entered into the mercantile business. David, son of Deacon David and grand-son of John Holmes, was now practicing as physician in the south part of the town. Dr. Parker Morse also enjoyed an extensive medical practice.

West Woodstock Society, after some years effort, completed its meeting-house. In 1747, glass was procured for glazing, and it was occupied in the following winter. Mr. Samuel Child was chosen to look over the boys and young people and keep them in order on the Sabbath days. Committees were chosen to seek suitable burying-places—one in the north, and one in the south part of the society. Ebenezer Corbin was appointed to make coffins, and Ebenezer Lyon to

dig graves. In 1749, it was voted, "To build a pulpit and body seats as soon as convenient. Instructions, as follows:—

1. Turn the pillows. 2. Build the two fore-seats like those in the first parish, but not to have banisters on the women's side. 3. The width of the aisles left to discretion of committee. 4. To build pulpit and deacon's seat decent and strong. 5. To have as many pews below as in the first parish."

The pew-spots were "voted to Joseph Marcy, Samuel Bugbee, Ebenezer Lyon, John Child, John Perin, Joshua Chandler, Abraham Perin, Joseph Chaffee, Jonathan Bugbee, John Marcy, Benjamin Marcy, Samuel Child, Edward Johnson, Joseph Hayward, Ed. Ainsworth and Benjamin Corbin—all to finish the walls and case the windows; these and their heirs to hold the pews, and not to sit in the body seats without liberty from the parish. Pews to be finished by first of June come-twelve-month, like those in old parish." "Pine stuff" was afterwards allowed for gallery seats, and liberty granted to Jonathan Morris, Samuel Child, Jun., Shubael Child and Henry and Stephen Bowen, to build front gallery pews at their own charge.

After the transference of the town to Connecticut, attempts were made to procure farther assistance, and a memorial presented to the General Assembly by Thomas Chandler, showing "That a second society had been set off, settled a good minister and built a meeting-house, but had not yet finished it, charge being great; that two or three thousand acres of land belonged to non-residents, and were benefited by the meeting-house, and prayed for a tax on such land," which was not granted. An Act of Assembly, in 1753, established the societies according to previous lines, and in the following year the name of New Roxbury was given to the second society. In December, 1754, a pound was ordered in New Roxbury, to be built "in the most frugal manner, at the charge of the town, provided New Roxbury inhabitants agree where to set it."

Schools in this society received much attention. Bunggee Brook was declared to be the dividing line between east and west districts. In 1750, it was voted to have three schools, one at Deacon Child's, one at Isaac Morris' and one at Jesse Carpenter's—and a hundred pounds granted for schooling. It was next voted to divide the society into three districts—north, south and west; the old school-house to be sold and proceeds divided: each district to build its own house and get its part of Mr. Williams' wood. Three men were chosen committee in each district. The southeast district was so populous that, in 1753, it was sub-divided by a line running straight from east to west, each division to build its own school-house.

The first society of Woodstock was chiefly occupied during this period by a very serious ministerial quarrel, resulting like the previous secular uneasiness in secession and separation. Dissatisfaction with

Mr. Stiles was the primal cause of this rupture. The early suspicion of his Saybrook Platform proclivities was heightened by transference to Connecticut, and inclusion within the limits of Windham County Association. The Woodstock church was greatly opposed to the Church Establishment of this Colony, and had formally manifested its determination to abide by the Cambridge Platform on which it was founded. Notwithstanding Mr. Stiles' assurance "of his innocent intentions" in joining Windham County Association, he had proceeded to act with that body as a member, and endeavored to bring his church under its jurisdiction. Little is known of the early stages of the difficulty, but by 1752 it had become so serious that a council was held, in which *nine* specific points of difference were presented, and with great care and pains, satisfactorily adjusted. A mutual agreement was adopted, amnesty declared, and all discords and differences apparently buried. Yet, notwithstanding this amicable settlement, in less than a year the controversy was re-opened by an overt act of Mr. Stiles. Himself a strict disciplinarian, favoring a strong church government, he had been greatly annoyed from his first connection with the Woodstock church by its lack of an explicit covenant and rules of discipline. Mr. Dwight had kept possession of the original records of the church, and the paper signed by Mr. Throop was simply a promise without specifications, "That the church should be managed or carried on after the form in which it was gathered." Attempts to introduce a more definite form and rules had been hitherto unsuccessful, but now Mr. Stiles, taking advantage of the unusual quiet and harmony, procured in some way "a copy of the original church covenant, and having added to it a postscript, adopting the substance of Cambridge Platform," without previous warning or discussion, he presented it to the church, March, 1753, and called upon the brethren to receive it and subscribe to it. How Mr. Stiles procured this "copy" of a document, which more than a quarter of a century before had been carried out of Woodstock, and must have been consumed with Mr. Dwight's other papers in the "dissolution of his house by fire," and why it was necessary to add to it "a postscript embodying the substance of Cambridge Platform," when it was simply an acknowledgment of that very Platform—were points which he did not attempt to elucidate, and which greatly perplexed the greater part of the church members. To them it seemed very unlike their original constitution and very similar to the obnoxious Saybrook. A majority of those present "would by no means consent" to sign this paper, whereupon Mr. Stiles, without giving time to consider and discuss so important a matter, or calling for a general vote of the church, proceeded to sign it with a small number of the brethren, and *declared its adoption* as the covenant of the church.



This "strange and unprecedented act" of Mr. Stiles opened a breach that was never healed. His opponents rallied in great force against this doubtful covenant, and resolutely refused to acknowledge it. Mr. Stiles, with great spirit, declined to make explanation or concession. Political and sectional feuds added bitterness to the controversy. Those gentlemen who had protested against secession from Massachusetts Government now took up arms for the original church covenant, while Connecticut sympathizers defended Mr. Stiles and his amendment, and soon "all peace, unity and good agreement were wholly destroyed and gone from among the people of the society and members of the church." The aggrieved brethren withdrew from Mr. Stiles' preaching and held meetings by themselves, and as the ministers hired by them were opposed to Saybrook Platform, they were stigmatized by the Stiles party as "Separates." Councils were called, whose earnest endeavors to accommodate matters were frustrated, it is said, "mainly by the conduct and influence of the pastor," who openly declared, "That he would never pull off his coat and then ask leave whether he should put it on again." To his nephew, Ezra Stiles, afterward president of Yale College, he writes: "The spring of the controversy appears to be this—certain of my lord brethren, extremely fearful of being priest-ridden, are attempting to be themselves priest-riders, but have already found it difficult to bridle, saddle and ride the priest according to their humor. Indeed, they seem as angry with y<sup>e</sup> Priest as Balaam with his ass, and for no better reason. I endeavor to rebuke the meanest of my riders, but Solomon tells us of a certain creature that hateth reproof." Mr. Stiles was very eager to institute a course of discipline with these refractory members, and in 1754 submitted to the Windham Association, "Whether the aggrieved members of the First Church in Woodstock, who had for some time absented themselves from the worship and communion of that church, are speedily to be censured for such withdrawal? "The Association, probably conscious that this withdrawal was not without cause, promptly replied in the negative, and upon the reiteration of this request, positively enjoined, "That the church wait a while longer upon them and proceed not to censure without a council." After three years of strife and contention, the breach continually widening, the aggrieved brethren, seeing no possibility of reunion, felt it their duty to assert their rights and privileges, and obtain recognition as the First Church of Woodstock. A venerable council of churches carefully considered the circumstances, and having unsuccessfully attempted a coalition between the contending parties, advised to this course. March 18, 1756, the council met in the meeting-house, and

after sermon and prayers adapted to the occasion, twenty-three brethren and twenty-one sisters signed the following covenant:—

“Whereas, we have divers years labored under pressing grievance respecting the conduct of our pastor and a number of brethren adhering to him—more especially in going off from the covenant signed by Mr. Throop, and endeavoring to impose in 1753 another and unsafe covenant which we can by no means consent unto, and notwithstanding all our petitions to the pastor and church, the means we have used with them, and the advice that has been given them in several results of councils, we have had no relief—and having had the advice and direction of a council of churches, we do now, under the conduct of Divine Providence, humbly sought by solemn fasting and prayer, reassume in church state on the ancient basis of the church whereof we stand members, and with all affection invite other members of said church to join with us in asserting our ancient, rightful powers and privileges.

Jonathan Payson.	David Bishop.	Thomas Ormsbee.
Samuel Chandler.	John Chaffee.	Ebenezer Chaffee.
Moses Barrett.	William Skinner.	Joseph Abbott.
Samuel Mashcraft.	Nathaniel Sanger.	Daniel Mashcraft.
Isaac Johnson.	Benjamin Bugbee.	Samuel Howlet, Jr.
John Morse.	Joseph Griggs.	Nathaniel Sanger, Jr.
Jonathan Hammond.	Josiah Brewer.	James Frizzell.”
John Bishop.	John Whiting.	

These members being previously interrogated concerning their faith and morals, and no objection offered, the council approved the covenant and acknowledged its signers, “a church in regular form according to usual method.” Thus recognized, the church proceeded to exercise its privileges. Samuel Chandler, Isaac Johnson, Benjamin Bugbee, John Morse and William Skinner, were chosen a committee, “to procure some meet person to labor among us in word and doctrine.” Their first choice fell somewhat unfortunately upon Mr. Curtis of New London, a minister of well-known Separate proclivities. Public worship was now carried on by them in a constant manner and the ordinances of the Gospel administered amongst them by sympathizing neighboring ministers. Their meetings were well attended, their numbers increased and it was claimed that nearly half the society attended with them. Petitions were proffered asking for a release from paying Mr. Stiles’ salary and also for society privileges, but received a prompt rejection.

This “amazing conduct” obliged Mr. Stiles to call a council, which declared “said incorporation to be null and void and too much like trifling with things sacred and momentous,” and solemnly called upon the Separating brethren to repent and return to their duty, “but all to no purpose”—for “they continued their Separate meetings in private houses contrary to Gospel rule and the good laws of the Colony, sadly affecting the peace of the church and society.” In this lamentable situation, Mr. Stiles and his adherents “knew not what better to do, than to direct their eyes under God to the Hon. Assembly of Connecticut,” and after assuring it that he had never in one instance deprived the brethren of any privilege allowed them by the Cambridge Platform but

had taken great care to preserve the original constitution of the Church, adjured it to interfere "so far as to appoint an Ecclesiastic Council of ministers and delegates to hear and determine the differences." Their opponents also appeared before this October session of the Assembly with a petition, presented by Isaac Johnson, William Skinner and David Holmes, and signed by seventy-one members of the society, in which they forcibly detailed their grievance with Mr. Stiles and resumption of church estate upon the basis of the first covenant, and as they were now so large a society as to be well able to maintain and support the Gospel in two places—their rates amounting to nearly thirteen thousand pounds—prayed for a distinct, separate society.

This simple solution of a troublesome difficulty was rejected by the Assembly, "which, taking into consideration their melancholy, divided state, was of opinion that dividing them into two ecclesiastic societies will not tend to remove the difficulties, but will be prejudicial to both civil and religious interests," and recommended both parties "to agree in calling a council of elders and messengers that have not hitherto been applied to by either." The large number of councils already held in Woodstock, made it somewhat difficult to comply with the suggestion of the Assembly, but having surmounted that obstacle its convention was rendered useless by a technical point that could not be adjusted. Mr. Stiles, after securing his quota of fresh elders and messengers, invited his opponents as "Separating brethren," to appear before them. These brethren, now formally recognized as representatives of the original church of Woodstock, would not compromise their standing by accepting this opprobrious appellation, and after much quibbling and sparring, the council came to naught. In the following January, the old-covenant party agreed to unite in calling a council, "provided the same shall consist of Congregational churches, such as are settled upon and regulated by Cambridge Platform—which constitution and no other, we acknowledge ourselves to be under." Mr. Stiles in reply, showed:—

"I. That they called a council; invited the people and made proposals which were refused.

II. We have repeatedly offered to join with you in a Congregational Council and never proposed any other, and are still desirous to join with you in calling a council not hitherto applied to by either."

He further expressed "his unfeigned sorrow that the wounds were not healed; considered them visible Christian brethren; as Christians have an interest neither essentially separate. Our interest is to unite in the love and service of Christ and each other. Many things in the aspect of Providence at this time [the war, prevailing sickness, the death of his own children and brother ministers] unite, and as it were, lift up their voices and beseech us to sheath the sword and prevent the bitterness of mutual destruction. Under a solemn sense of these weighty and interesting truths, let us determine that nothing on either side shall be lacking to effectuate accommodation."

Had Mr. Stiles followed his own precepts, accommodation might,

perhaps, have even then been effected, but this very document was marred by disingenuous quibbling. His opponents had refused to join in the prescribed council because he had persisted in calling them to it under a title which they could not acknowledge, and his councils of Saybrook Platform churches were not *Congregational* as they understood the term. The indignant brethren accused Mr. Stiles of a want of honesty in his statements, and wished him to define what he meant by Congregationalism. They meant, "Congregational churches settled upon Cambridge Platform or such as acknowledge said Platform for their rule without any special regard to any other rule of human institution, though they do not come up to it in every article—which constitution the Woodstock church agreed to in the first settlement till the late alteration made yourselves, which we think very unwarrantable and unjustifiably done . . . and we desire you to understand that we shall not admit of any persons nor churches to sit as a council on this present controversy but those of our own constitution, and hope you will give over any future thought that we shall be brought to consent to do ourselves so much wrong as to comply with any other proposal."

Mr. Stiles saw by this reply, "That they were fully determined not to comply with the direction of the General Assembly." On the contrary, declare the brethren, "We have always wished a council of Congregational churches, and desire you would meet us at the meeting-house, March 9, 1757." Mr. Stiles stated conditions such as the brethren "had always denied and could not comply with." The brethren insisted upon points which Mr. Stiles would in no measure agree to—especially with reference to overhauling the differences prior to the settlement of 1752. Failing in all attempts even to initiate negotiation, both parties again repaired to the Assembly and represented their several hardships. The old-covenant adherents declared, that they only persisted in adhering to the above-said ancient covenant while the adverse party had actually gone off therefrom and assumed another form of discipline essentially different, "the same being obvious to every inquiring mind without much labor to come at the knowledge of it," and begged the Assembly "to consider the inconsistency of the thing in its own nature, and the violence that must be done to our consciences, in that we should be compelled to uniformity with a minister and his adherents who have so far departed from the ancient order, and be made to suffer for abiding in the same after so long an usage therein in conformity with the sister churches throughout the Province of which we were a part when first embodied in church estate, and ever since the changing government still conscientiously holding the same form of worship." Thus circumstanced, they had confidence in the Act allowing certain privileges to dissenting churches, and as the first



society in Woodstock was sufficient in numbers and abilities to compose two societies, "prayed and entreated to be set off as a distinct society both in respect of civil and ecclesiastic order, liberty and privilege, or, if you disapprove that, into two societies locally divided, though this expedient might not remove all the troubles your petitioners are groaning under."

Mr. Stiles solemnly reiterated his denial of having in any manner departed from the original constitution of the church, and further testified:—

"That the separating brethren continued their Separate meetings in a private house, contrary to the laws of this Government and for a length of time have employed Mr. Curtis for their teacher, whose praise in time past has been at New London and New Haven, and no less now at Woodstock. Moreover, they publicly boast their resolution of speedily building a meeting-house and have already provided materials, and carried considerable quantities of timber to the very place where a meeting-house is to be erected, and is not all this a *demonstration* of their *utmost reluctance* to any method of procedure *not countenanced and warranted by the Assembly*. And though they mention their submission to the jurisdiction of this Government, they almost compel us to say that it is well known some of their leaders and principal managers, since their forced submission to this Government, discovered a like disaffection to its *civil constitution* as to the original constitution of this church, and from what was openly spoken at Freeman's meeting here last month, we have good reason to conclude, 'it will be no part of their sorrow if next Thursday should discover a mournful demise of some who deservedly fill the principal seats of the Legislature.' An impartial council, to examine all matters of grievance that have fallen out since our settlement in 1752 . . . would best subserve the interests of religion."

Quite likely, Mr. Stiles with all his tact and shrewdness, somewhat over-reached himself in these insinuations against the loyalty and orthodoxy of his opponents. The Government of Connecticut might be more disposed by them to *conciliate* a people so recently received under its jurisdiction, and of whose "suddenness and resolution of temper" it had such abundant proof; nor could it scarcely be made to believe that a movement led by such men as Chandler, Holmes, Payson, Morse and Skinner, was nothing more than a mere Separate outbreak. So serious seemed the difficulty, that it nominated a number of prominent ministers—the Reverend Messrs. Peter Reynolds of Enfield, Ashbel Woodbridge of Glastenbury, Edward Eells of Middletown, Elnathan Whitman of Hartford, James Lockwood of Weathersfield, Free grace Leavett of Somers, and Ebenezer Gay of Suffield, to repair to Woodstock with messengers from their several churches, as a council to hear the contending parties. The council convened, September 6, 1757, and came to this result:—

"It seems to us that Mr. Stiles has been guilty of imprudence in several instances, has treated some of the aggrieved with too much harshness and severity both in public and private. Brethren not to be justified for withdrawing. Mr. Stiles guilty of no offence disqualifying him for the ministry; advises Mr. Stiles to make some reflections upon himself for his imprudent conduct, and endeavor to avoid all occasion of offence in future by treating all his people as becomes a minister of the Gospel, with condescension and

respect; advises the aggrieved brethren to return to the communion of the church again. If Joseph Griggs will publicly own in presence of this council the confession contained in the result of a former council, the church will take off his censure and restore him to communion. Recommend pastor and brethren to live in the mutual exercise of forbearance and study things that make for peace. Mr. Stiles to say—‘I freely own that in several instances I have been imprudent in my conduct towards my people, and have treated some of them with very unbecoming rashness and severity, and been wanting in the exercise of that meekness and gentleness which becomes a Gospel minister, which I desire may be overlooked and forgiven, and it shall be my care and endeavor to behave in a more unexceptionable manner for time to come, and to give no occasion to any to be offended with me.’ But in case this advice does not attain the desired end, as the peace of a church is of great importance, and these difficulties have been of long continuance and appear to us very great, after waiting three months to see if peace cannot be obtained, they would advise Mr. Stiles to resign his office among the people as a means to promote their peace and edification. Advise all parties to avoid everything that may have a tendency to inflame the divisions or increase the alienation and use their utmost endeavors to promote a happy union.

*Sept. 27, 1757."*

This excellent advice, as might be expected, had no influence whatever, and was almost unheeded. Mr. Stiles did *not* make the humble, little confession prescribed him, nor take off Joseph Griggs' censure, nor even read the Result of the Council to his congregation; nor did the aggrieved brethren make any overtures of reconciliation. Only one attempt was made to effectuate accommodation. Though the Council did not formally pronounce judgment upon the rejected Stiles-covenant, they examined it in private, and "for peace's sake" drafted a substitute which they hoped might suit all parties, and accordingly near the expiration of the three months the following letter was sent to the committee "to communicate to Separates:"—

"Whereas, in your memorial you complain of our departing from the original constitution respecting discipline as the principal ground and reason of your petition, and whereas, an ecclesiastic council did publicly acquit us— notwithstanding, said council were pleased to draft a covenant for us. Therefore we inform you that we have examined the same and are willing to accept it, on condition of your returning to the worship and communion of the church, and upon your return promise to receive you. If you desire a conference, we are willing to attend it at any proper time and place.

ABEL STILES. *Dec. 7, 1757."*

This proposition was not even considered by the old-covenant party. They were now utterly opposed to reunion upon any terms whatsoever, and had Mr. Stiles signified his willingness to sign the Throop agreement, or even the Cambridge Platform itself, they would scarcely have gone back to him. It was not a question of Platform but of *will* and *sections*. The South fought for division and the North for union, and each section was fully determined to have its own way. A majority of the church members apparently favored Mr. Stiles, but in the society parties were nearly balanced. Three months having passed without the return of peace, according to the advice of the council Mr. Stiles was to resign his ministerial office, but that was agreeable neither to

him or his adherents. At a society meeting, December 12, the Stiles party, "by a bare majority," elected the committee, and proceeded to vote the usual sum for his support. The church adhering to him, also voted, December 17, "That it would not be for our peace and edification for Rev. Mr. Stiles to be dismissed, but the contrary." A request was immediately sent to the society committee to warn a meeting "that the minds might be known about Mr. Stiles' dismission," at which, after fair and open debate, it was voted, "That Mr. Stiles *should resign*, by a majority of more than two to one." Flushed with this triumph, the anti-Stiles party asked for another meeting to reconsider the vote of December 12, and take some care for supplying the pulpit, but the committee refused to warn it, whereby public affairs were involved in great confusion. In May, both parties again appealed to the Assembly, each giving its own version, and declaring, "That not we, but the other parties are the only cause that peace is not restored." The Assembly declined to remove Mr. Stiles, nullify the salary vote, or divide the society, but took no measure "to vindicate the Result of Council, and order the same carried into effect." Thus left to themselves, the strife waxed hotter and fiercer. The anti-Stiles party, embracing most of the inhabitants of Woodstock Hill and South Woodstock, gained upon their opponents. Their conventions for public worship on the Lord's day, but a few steps from the meeting-house, greatly disturbed Mr. Stiles and his diminishing congregation. At the annual society meeting in December, it was voted, by a majority of *one*, "That they would *not* grant any tax on said inhabitants for the payment of Rev. Mr. Stiles' salary." At their next meeting they went a step farther, and voted to assess all the estates for the support of a minister, and in spite of protest and resistance proceeded to collect it from all the inhabitants. The belligerents now broke out into open warfare. The Stiles party were in turn forced to pay for the support of their opponents. Collectors levied taxes from the whole society, and applied the same to "private use of majority." Appeals to the County Court were unsuccessful, that body judging the assessments unlawful, but that the Assembly only could give relief. Again, in December, 1759, the society refused to pay Mr. Stiles' salary, and granted a rate for society expenses. Gaining boldness with numbers, it now threatened to take possession of the meeting-house. Richard Flynn was chosen key-keeper, and Samuel Chandler and Colonel John Payson a committee to wait upon Mr. Flynn, and to desire Mr. Cooper to deliver up the key of the meeting-house—and if he refuses, demand the same. Mr. Cooper refusing both request and demand, Zebulon Dodge was requested to take off the lock, and put on another, and deliver the key to Mr. Flynn, the appointed keeper of meeting-house. The friends of

Mr. Stiles found it extremely difficult to maintain their footing, obliged, as they now were, to pay society rate and their own church expenses. The fiercest bitterness, rancor and enmity prevailed. Well might Mr. Stiles exclaim, "I sojourn in Mesheck and dwell in the tents of Kedar, . . . my lot is yet among the Amorites, encompassed with storms, and the Zanzummins, whose arms appear to be that of pricks in my eyes and thorns in my side. Nothing saves me from ruin but the horrid, iniquitous measures taken to destroy me." Yet, notwithstanding "the scourge of malignant tongues," Mr. Stiles "had no thought of attempting to leave his people, for in general they appeared friendly, and the better sort resolutely attached to him"—but unflinchingly maintained his ground, even when meeting-house and pulpit were invaded. At a meeting of the inhabitants of the first society of Woodstock, February 4, 1760, it was voted:—

"I. That the society meet in the meeting-house in said society on Lord's day for public worship for the future.

II. That there be a committee chosen to supply the pulpit, till farther orders, in the room of Mr. Stiles.

III. That Mr. Samuel Chandler be a committee to supply the pulpit with some suitable person to preach, and that the clerk serve Mr. Stiles with a copy of the transactions of this society, that he may know the minds of the society, and so not presume to go into the desk on Lord's day to disturb the society in the public worship as he has heretofore done."

This act of ejection was forcibly carried out. In the face of this injunction, Mr. Stiles *did* presume to go into the desk, already appropriated by the society's minister, and tradition reports a disgraceful collision—angry belligerents attempting to haul the rival ministers from the pulpit; a free fight raging through the contested meeting-house; the women joining in the fray, exchanging cuffs, pulling off caps and bonnets, till the Stiles party, overcome by numbers, were forced to yield possession. This rencontre cleared the air and virtually ended the controversy. The friends of Mr. Stiles at length saw the folly of coercion, and reluctantly yielded to the will of the majority. In response to a petition asking for the annulment of rates, the Assembly ordered all farther proceeding suspended, and appointed William Pitkin, Jabez Hamlin and William Wolcot to use their best endeavors to accommodate and make a settlement. The committee met July 10, and fully heard the matters of difference. No prospect appeared that the whole society would be united in, or content with the present minister, but on the contrary, both parties were willing to facilitate division. Under any circumstances, this division could be deferred but a few years, and the committee judged it expedient to effect it at once, and arranged the following terms:—

"1. All that part of first society lying north of an east and west line



dividing between the north and south proprietors, shall be a distinct ecclesiastic society to maintain and support the Rev. Mr. Stiles during his continuing their minister. Inhabitants of north part pay to Mr. Stiles such of his salary after the expiration of the present yearly service, until the said north part shall be constituted a society, and then the inhabitants shall pay their tax to such society to which they belong, yet any such person to have liberty to attend divine service in the other society that they shall not be accounted disorderly therein.

2. That out of the money already granted by first society Mr. Stiles be paid his last year's salary.

3. As to meeting-house now standing in first society—said first society, south part, shall pay and refund to north part after constituted a society, a hundred pounds as their part and proportion of the meeting-house, viz., fifty pounds when north society shall have their meeting-house raised, and fifty more when meeting-house is covered and inclosed.

4. As soon as the Gen. Assembly shall constitute north part a society, the meeting-house shall be relinquished by north society to south, so that neither north part nor their minister shall have any further right or calling therein.

5. All the utensils belonging to church and communion table shall be equally divided between the two societies.

The subscriber, present pastor of said first church in Woodstock, hereby manifest my free consent to the division of said society on terms above expressed, but yet would not be understood to have the former covenant between me and society any way altered or vacated until such division be accomplished.

ABEL STILES.

We, the subscribers, appointed by first society, having considered the impossibility of having matters of difference settled while we remain in our present situation, in order to have peace restored, and mutual love and friendship for the future subsist amongst us, come into the foregoing agreement.

ISAAC JOHNSON.

PARKER MORSE.

JOHN MAY.

JOHN MORSE.

NATHANIEL CHILD.

ELISHA CHILD."

*Woodstock, July 20, 1760.*

The report of the committee was accepted by the Assembly, and the north society of Woodstock duly set off and incorporated in the following October, and after so many years of strife the difficulties were adjusted. Apparently the settlement was as equitable as could have been devised. The north part had the minister and the south part the meeting-house; the north took the church; the south the society records, and *both* retained the title of the First Church of Woodstock.

### III.

#### ABINGTON SOCIETY. CONTEST WITH POMFRET. CHURCH ORGANIZATION.

POMFRET, though happily unaffected by the spirit of Separation, did not escape church and society division during this stormy period. The unwelcome Mortlake was appended on the south, while the western section which she so valued was cut off. The growth of

this section in numbers and wealth made this division needful. Old families had multiplied and new ones come in. The one meeting-house of Pomfret had become too small for the large congregation, and the western inhabitants, after weary miles of travel, could not find comfortable seats in which to hear the Word of God dispensed to them. This difficulty was generally discussed in 1748; and many modes of relief suggested. During the winter, a number of inhabitants in the southwest were allowed to hire preaching for themselves. February 6, 1749, the society held its first public meeting to consider what should be done for the better accommodation of the church-goers. Very great difference of opinion was manifested. The western inhabitants generally favored incorporation as a distinct society; the eastern opposed them, but were factious and divided among themselves. Deacon Holbrook, in particular, declared in the strongest manner against division, and dismally prognosticated "that every one would have to pay for building two meeting-houses; property would be sunk two hundred pounds out of a thousand, and instead of the best of preaching which they then enjoyed, they should have nothing but a parcel of New Light stuff, while, if they would all join in supporting one another in their present rights and privileges, the gates of Hell should not prevail against them." After earnest and warm discussion it was put to vote:—

"1. Whether we would build a house for public worship for the use of the society in the centre of the land contained in the society? No.

2. Whether we would build within two rods of the place whereon the present meeting-house stands? No.

3. Whether we would build two meeting-houses in the society for the society's use, still remaining one entire society? No.

4. Whether we would divide and become two distinct societies? No."

Unable to agree upon anything, the society adjourned to meet again March 20; Captain Leicester Grosvenor served as moderator, and the following questions were considered:—

"1. Whether we would divide and become two distinct societies according to the military-line? No.

2. Whether we would divide into two distinct societies beginning south at the north line of Mortlake society and running north between the Purchase land and lands of Captain Malbone to Blackwell's Brook, thence to Mashamoquet Brook and by said brook till it comes to a highway between Deacon Philemon Chandler and Eb. Hide, and thence north to the northeast corner of Mr. John Sessions, Hamlet Town, and thence due west to Ashford line? No.

3. Whether we would divide into two societies by the above line to the highway between Chandler's and Hide's, thence by Mashamoquet to Morey's lands? No.

4. Whether, there being a division of sentiments in the society with respect to its remaining one or becoming more societies, the society will be determined in that matter by a committee to be appointed by the Gen. Assembly? No.

5. Whether we will enlarge and repair our present meeting-house? No.

6. Whether the society judge it necessary to erect a new meeting-house for the whole society? No.

7. Whether the society would build a new meeting-house on the place where present meeting-house stands? No.

8. Whether the society will build a new meeting-house on the most commodious part of the place of Parade near the present meeting-house? No.

9. Whether the society will build a meeting-house for the whole society on the most convenient place on the highway between Nathaniel Sessions and Dea. Sam'l Sumner? No."

So adverse and unaccommodating was the temper of this meeting that even the customary convenient privilege of "allowing swine belonging to the society" to run at large, "being well-ringed and yoked according to law," was peremptorily denied. Unable to agree upon a single point, they adjourned. April 13, they again refused to refer the matter to a committee appointed by the General Assembly. The western inhabitants were meantime preparing to lay their case before that body. United by peril, the society now voted, April 25, "That the whole society should be measured and a centre determined by a north and south, east and west line." One affirmative led to another, and swine were now allowed their ancient privileges. Concession came too late to stop the tide of secession. As soon as possible after the session of the Assembly, a committee from the western inhabitants of Pomfret appeared before it, showing:—

"That some of them are six; some five; thirty of us, four; some more, three, and others two miles from the place of worship. Have questioned the first society to find some way to help us, and trial hath been made to make a line to set us off to be a society by ourselves. Meeting-house abundantly too small; trial hath been made to build a new one, and when that failed, to add to the first, and again to build a new one—all of which have failed, and we are still under our burden of traveling, and in great and distressing difficulty in respect to the smallness of our meeting-house, and can't agree upon a method to help ourselves, and pray the Assembly to divide us in two societies, beginning where Mashamoquet Brook meets northwest corner of Mortlake.

Benjamin Stephens.	Samuel Craft.	Ebenezer Goodell.
Ephraim Ingalls.	John Ward.	Edward Goodell.
William Preston.	Obadiah Lyon.	Nathan Abbott.
David Stowell.	William Wedge.	Nathan Griggs.
Joseph Philips.	Jonathan Lyon.	William Abbot.
Thomas Grow, Jun.	John Ingalls.	Beechem Goodell.
Solomon Sharpe.	James Ingalls.	Zechariah Goodell.
Joseph Craft.	Richard Peabody.	Rinaldo Borden.
Edward Paine.	Albert Peabody.	Dan. Holt.
Joseph Ingalls.	John Sharpe.	

*April 1, 1749."*

James Ingalls appeared as agent for the petitioners; Ebenezer Holbrook, for the society. William Pitkin, Jonathan Trumbull and John Crary were appointed a committee to consider the circumstances of the town and pleas of the agents, and promptly reported in favor of division—whereupon the Assembly thus enacted:—

"HARTFORD, *May 2, 1749.*

Resolved by the Assembly, that an ecclesiastical society be, and is hereby erected in the west part of said township, and that the bounds thereof be as follows: bounded north on Woodstock, westerly on the line between said Pomfret and Ashford, and southerly and westerly on the line dividing between said town of Pomfret and Windham, so far south as to the parish already

made partly out of said Pomfret, and partly out of Canterbury and partly out of Mortlake; thence by said parish eastwardly to Mortlake west side, thence by Mortlake to the southwesterly corner of the Rev. Ebenezer Williams' farm—saving also all the lands and persons that are west of said Mortlake to said parish, that hath been made as aforesaid, that are already granted to said parish; and from said Williams, his said corner, the line to run northerly to the southwest corner of Jonathan Dresser's land, from thence to run between J. Dresser's land and the land of Benjamin Allen to Mashamoquet Brook, from thence to run northerly so as to include the dwelling-house of Ebenezer Holbrook, Jun., on the west; from thence to run northwesterly until it comes to the road which crosses the Mill Brook at one hundred and fifty-five rods distance, as the road runs easterly from said brook; from thence to run north nine degrees easterly, to Woodstock line—including those families that live within said town of Pomfret which were heretofore allowed by Act of Assembly to take parish privileges in the second society of Windham—and that the limits aforesaid be the limits of one ecclesiastic society, with all the powers and privileges of the other ecclesiastic societies in this Colony. And that the said parish be called and known by the name of Abington. And be it further resolved by the Assembly that there be, and hereby is, annexed to the remaining part of the said town of Pomfret, the northerly part of that tract of land called Mortlake (which is not included in said parish made partly out of Canterbury, Pomfret and Mortlake) and that the said easterly part of said town of Pomfret, with the said northerly part of said Mortlake, be, and remains to be, the first ecclesiastical society in said Pomfret, with all the powers and privileges of other ecclesiastic societies in this Colony."

The assigned limits, though in the main satisfactory to the petitioners, gave great offence to the other parties interested, viz., the principal owner of Mortlake, the transferred Canadians, and more than all, the old society of Pomfret; but undisturbed by menacing murmurs, the new society hastened to avail itself of its privileges. The territory assigned was more liberal than had been expected. Ebenezer Holbrook, Daniel Trowbridge, David Chandler, Caleb Grosvenor, Alexander Sessions, William Osgood, Ebenezer, Eleazer and Phineas Stoddard, though not among the petitioners, were included within the society limits. The Stoddards had apparently taken possession of part of the Stoddard tract. William Osgood of Andover had purchased land of Joseph Bowman and Benjamin Ingalls in 1747, and settled south of the Mashamoquet. Abington thus numbered about fifty families. The inhabitants met June 19, 1749, at the house of James Ingalls, "to form themselves into a society." Captain Joseph Craft was chosen moderator; Edward Goodell, collector. It was voted, "To accept of the house of James Ingalls to have preaching in;" also, "That the committee shall provide a good minister." The committee elected was Captain James Craft, Alexander Sessions, and Richard Peabody. James Ingalls was chosen clerk. As the Assembly had now deputed the duty of selecting sites for meeting-houses to the Courts of the several counties, it was voted, "That a committee come from the County Court to fix the place in the society, to build a meeting-house, or for public worship." At the second meeting, September 13, many matters were arranged. It was put to vote, whether they



would grant one shilling on the pound to defray the charges of the society, and it was passed in the affirmative. Also, whether they judged it necessary to build a house for the public worship of God; and it passed in the affirmative, there being thirty-eight in the affirmative and nine in the negative. Lieutenant John Ingalls, Richard Goodell and William Osgood were chosen a committee to provide materials to build the house. Voted, "That our society meetings for the future shall be warned by posting up notifications at the house of James Ingalls, at Josiah Wheeler's and at Esq. Holbrook's mill. That William Osgood apply to the County Court for a committee to fix a spot for the meeting-house to stand on. That there shall be nothing done in our society meeting but what is inserted in the warning. That the society committee shall provide a minister to preach the Gospel among us."

At the next meeting, affairs were less promising. Pomfret had appealed with her grievances to the General Court, and it was possible that their privileges might be curtailed, if not wholly taken from them. It was therefore voted, "*Not* to give the committee instructions about procuring materials for building a meeting-house." Deacon Ebenezer Holbrook was appointed agent for Abington society, with liberty to employ Major Fowler to assist him in answering the memorial of Nath. Johnson and others. This memorial, signed also by Thomas Cotton, Nath. and Amasa Sessions, Samuel Warner, Philemon Chandler, Joshua Sabin, Joseph Philips, Samuel Sumner, Jonathan Dresser, Benjamin Griffin, Zachary Waldo, Benjamin Sawyer, and many other first settlers of Pomfret, reflected very severely upon Deacon Holbrook, the previous agent of the first society, who, after strongly opposing division—when sent to the Assembly to negotiate, "found the duty of condescension very consistent with his own interest, and came into such free and generous measures and concessions as induced said Assembly, without any previous view or report of a committee, to set off said memorialists with limits larger and more extensive than they seemed ever before to have thought of, and formed a new society called Abington, and in compensation for such curtailing had annexed a quantity of almost waste and refuse land in the town of Mortlake." This resolution was very grievous in divers respects to the first society, and also to some within the limits of Abington, who found themselves "disjoined by a very long, rough and almost impassable *way* from the most expected place of public worship" in the new society—"being also by a much shorter and better one able to meet in worship with the first society." As for Mortlake, in regard to what it had already cost, as well as the ills most probably consequential to its annexing, which would be very great—the seeming gift would be found a heavy loss.

The memorialists declared, finally, that they had never been truly represented, and prayed the Assembly "to reduce and confine" the obtrusive parish.

The Assembly, reluctant to change bounds, and evidently favorably disposed to the younger society, deferred consideration of this memorial. Encouraged by this delay, Abington resumed attempts at settlement. At a society-meeting, December 6, it was voted:—

"1. To have three months schooling in the school-house the present winter.

2. To build a meeting-house of the same dimensions as that of Pomfret.

3. The meeting-house to be studded.

4. If any person or persons in said society will work on meeting-house or provide stuff as cheap as any other, he or they shall have the advantage.

5. It was put to vote, whether they inclined to hear any other gentleman that hath not yet preached with us, and it passed in the negative."

A committee having selected an acceptable meeting-house site, John Ingalls was chosen agent "to move the Court to establish the doings of the committee who were appointed by the Court to view the society and fix a spot to build a meeting-house on." Apparently no minister was engaged for the winter, as a rate was granted to pay the school-master and other necessary expenses; but none for preaching. Services were probably held in James Ingalls' house, a little south of the present Abington Village. In April, it was voted to hire a school-dame three months, but *not* to appoint an agent, grant money for preaching, or settle the line between the south society. Later, James Ingalls was sent to the Assembly to oppose memorialists. A new "committee-man was chosen in place of Alexander Sessions, gone to sea."

Upon considering the memorial of Pomfret's first society, May, 1750, Luke Perkins, Jed. Chapman and Humphrey Avery were appointed to repair to Pomfret, view and report. These gentlemen met at the inn of Benjamin Sabin in August, heard the different statements, and reported in favor of maintaining Abington Society, but changing the bounds—"the line to begin where Mashamoquet Brook meets Blackwell's; from thence three and a half miles in a direct line to [towards] northwest corner of said Pomfret;" thence due north to the south line of Woodstock. By this change, a large slice would be cut off from Abington on the north and a small strip added on the south. The exclusion of Mortlake from Pomfret society was also recommended. This attempted amendment, as usual, pleased no one. A large number of residents in both parishes indignantly represented "That the committee, not fully knowing the situation of the inhabitants, have drawn such a line as in no measure suits either party, and will have the most natural tendency to make a lasting quarrel in both parishes." Ebenezer Holbrook even went so far as to pray to be made one society again. Eight residents of Mortlake also protested most earnestly

against Perkins' report, as they desired not to be excluded from ecclesiastic privileges. Godfrey Malbone, on the other hand, manifested his objections to annexation to the north society of Pomfret upon any terms, as it laid his interest under the disadvantage of being connected with two societies. Benjamin Chaplin and other residents of the south-west corner of Pomfret also stated their grievances, "That, whereas, by the providence of God, they were settled very remote from the centres of Abington and Mortlake societies, and were obliged to travel four or five miles to the public worship of God, and other public days, but were within one or two miles from the meeting-house in Canada Parish, and had been annexed thereto formerly as to parish privileges, but had now been transferred to Abington, which was very inconvenient and burdensome, and therefore begged to be allowed to continue in Canada by a line drawn, or any way." The Assembly, perplexed by these conflicting remonstrances, rejected Perkins' report, and deferred final decision.

Still sanguine of ultimate success, Abington proceeded to appoint a committee "to provide a minister and house for worship." The minister provided was Mr. Daniel Welch, afterwards pastor of the church in North Mansfield. January 14, 1751, John and James Ingalls, William Osgood, Daniel Trowbridge and Edward Paine were chosen a committee "for setting up, building and finishing a meeting-house—forty-eight feet by thirty-nine." Twenty pounds, old tenor, were allowed to Zechariah Goodell for one half-acre of land for building-site, and a rate was ordered to pay the minister and school-master. In the spring, renewed attempts were made to effect a settlement of boundary. Osgood and Craft had been previously empowered to view the line between Mortlake and Abington, and now a committee was appointed to meet with one chosen by Mortlake and agree upon the divisional line between these parishes. The first society now aroused herself for a final effort to regain the whole or part of her territory. Nathaniel Johnson, Leicester Grosvenor, William Sharpe and other old settlers, again appeared before the Assembly in May, averring:—

"That the first division granted by Assembly was unjust; that the second, by Perkins, would have accommodated and quieted all parties now remaining in confusion, but report objected against because committee had not reported with the care and impartiality which was their duty, and begged for its reconsideration."

Against which, sixty-six inhabitants of Abington and seven of Mortlake, thus remonstrated:—

"That in May, 1749, Pomfret was divided into two societies, since which sundry persons in first society have shown uneasiness from time to time, and have now presented a memorial, whereupon we would say: That we are well satisfied with the bounds, though they are small, and must undergo many hardships to build a meeting-house and maintain the Gospel, and have purposed to have a meeting-house spot fixed according to law and have proceeded

to build so far that said house will be raised immediately, and things at present look more smiling, but if your memorialists' petition be accepted [viz., Perkins' division line be confirmed] it will take off six of our able inhabitants and alter the form of said society so that its meeting-house will in no measure accommodate the inhabitants, and the society will be diminished and inevitably broke to pieces, so that they shall never have the Gospel settled among them nor be able to support the same. And the Mortlake people say that they were made part of Pomfret first society with powers and privileges equal to others, and had the privilege of the worship of God, but if the report of committee be accepted, they will belong to no ecclesiastic society nor have the privilege of attending worship in any safety in this Government without intruding on the rights of others, and are willing to do their proportion in maintaining public worship and schools, and those subscribers in Pomfret—not Mortlake and Abington—would show that the first society in Pomfret is well situate and considerable comfortable as to bounds, and although some inhabitants in the north are uneasy, yet to make an alteration would almost or quite break up Abington, and grieve the inhabitants of North Mortlake and deny them the common privilege of Christian people, and will grieve, hurt and make uneasy *three* persons in Pomfret for *one* now discontented, and pray you to reject memorial.

*April 30, 1751."*

This prayer was granted, and the line between the parishes allowed to remain as stated. A tax of four shillings an acre for four years was also allowed to the new society. Having thus triumphantly surmounted so many threatening evils and secured confirmation of satisfactory bounds, Abington was able to accomplish the great object of all her labors and endeavors—finish her meeting-house and settle a minister. In the summer of 1751, the meeting-house was raised and covered, and though still very incomplete, made ready for occupation. A three-months' school was ordered at Solomon Howe's in the south, and another at John Sharpe's in the north of the society. Mr. Jabez Whitmore preached through the winter, and made himself so acceptable to the people that after solemn fasting and prayer, with advice of the neighboring ministers he was invited to settle, April 23, 1752. Failing in this attempt, the society next secured the services of Mr. David Ripley of Windham, a graduate of Yale College, recently licensed by Windham Association, and on December 24, gave him a formal call to the pastorate; voting—

"To pay him twelve hundred pounds in bills of public credit, old tenor, of this or the neighboring Governments; to be paid in two years, six hundred pounds in a year; the time of payment to begin when Mr. Ripley is ordained. This for his settlement; and for salary, to pay five hundred pounds a year and after two years to rise gradually as we advance on the common list till it rises to six hundred pounds, and then, that the sum of six hundred pounds be paid annually. . . . The money for the salary to be made equal to wheat at forty shillings, rye at thirty shillings, Indian corn at twenty shillings and oats at ten shillings a bushel; and pork at two shillings and beef at sixteen-pence a pound."

Mr. Ripley signifying his acceptance of these terms, it was voted, "That the committee of the society wait on Rev. Ebenezer Williams, and take his advice as to our keeping a day of fasting and prayer previous to ordination." The subsequent proceedings are best described in



the "Book for church records given to the church at Abington by their unworthy pastor, David Ripley:—

After that the inhabitants of the society of Abington had for some considerable time publicly endeavored to settle themselves in a Gospel state, they at length, by the permission and government of Divine Providence, having a prospect of settlement; those of them who belonged to the first church of Pomfret, which was by far the greater part, applied to the Rev. Mr. Ebenezer Williams and to the brethren of the church, January 23, 1753, to be dismissed from their relation to that church that so they might be embodied in church state in their own society; who were accordingly on the 28th day of the same month of Jan., in compliance with their desire, regularly dismissed from their relation to that church by the Rev. pastor with conference of the brethren; and on the 31st day of the same month, it being a fast appointed to ask the direction and guidance of God in the momentous concern of settling a pastor; for the examination of David Ripley, their then pastor-elect, and for the embodying of the dismissed above mentioned—for which reasons and upon which account, the eastern committee of Windham Association was applied to; of which, upon said application, came Rev. Ebenezer Williams of Pomfret; Rev. Marston Cabot of Thompson; Rev. Abel Stiles of Woodstock; Rev. Samuel Mosely of Hampton; Rev. Ephraim Avery of Brooklyn; Rev. James Cogswell of Canterbury: by whom the business of the day was solemnly and decently, suitable to its design and intention, carried on; after which, the dismissed having subscribed the subsequent covenant or agreement . . . . . were, before the above-mentioned committee and many others, spectators from the neighboring societies, declared by Rev. Ebenezer Williams to be a regular church of Christ, and they should be so looked upon and treated by the neighboring churches."

Thirty-four males and twenty-nine females subscribed the covenant, and were recognized as the church in Abington. A day was speedily appointed for the ordination of the minister. A committee of the church sent letters missive to the first and second churches of Pomfret; the second and third churches of Windham; the first of Woodstock, second of Killingly, and the church of Canterbury, desiring their presence and assistance. The society provided, "That the ministers and messengers and other gentlemen of a liberal education, with Mr. Ripley's friends and relations, should be entertained at the house of Mr. William Osgood." The ordination services were "decently and solemnly carried on," February 21, 1753—Mr. Devotion of Scotland, Mr. Ripley's early pastor, preaching the sermon. March 14, the church chose as suitable persons to serve as deacons, Samuel Craft and Samuel Ruggles—and thus religious worship and ordinances were at length established.

Efforts were now made to complete the meeting-house. A body of seats had been built, but pews were lacking. In May, 1753, it was voted, "To grant the pew room; the highest on the list to have the first choice and so downward; no man to dispose of his pew only with the *farm* by which he draws it." *Land*, it will be seen, was then *king* in Abington. Caleb Grosvenor had the honor to pay the heaviest rate, and draw the first pew spot. Mr. Ripley and family were allowed the pew by the pulpit stairs. The remaining pew-spots were drawn in the following order:—John Shaw, James Ingalls, Edward Paine, John

Ingalls, William Osgood, John Sharpe, Daniel Trowbridge, Captain Craft, Captain Goodell, Nathaniel Stowell, Richard Peabody, Jonathan Dana, Edward Goodell, Ebenezer Goodell. Each proprietor was to build his own pew within a year. A sum of money *supposed* to have been given by Abiel Lyon to the society, was appropriated to the building the pulpit.

Schools received continually more attention. In 1752, three schools were allowed, two months in each part—each part to provide a house; middle school at Mr. Howe's. In the following year, two school-houses were voted—Goodell, Paine and Grosvenor to fix spots. Spots were assigned the succeeding year, but the houses were not provided. December, 1755, it was ordered, "That the centre school be kept in the old school-house; north school at Caleb Grosvenor's and south school at Edward Goodell's, if he is willing." In the following year, the school-house vote was reconsidered. Edward Goodell's southwest corner was selected for the south school-house. A cheerful site "between the hearse-house and stock-place," south of the meeting-house on Captain Goodell's land, was assigned for the centre; the north school-house was ambiguously stated "on Ashford road." Again, in 1757, the matter was reconsidered and four school-houses were ordered, and two were actually built in 1760. In town and public affairs, Abington parish bore her full share; her citizens filling a just proportion of needful town offices. Ebenezer Holbrook, Joseph Craft, William Osgood and John Grosvenor were sent successively as representatives to the General Assembly. An excellent house of entertainment was kept by James Ingalls, one of its most prominent and respected citizens. The first physician in Abington was Elisha Lord, who purchased land "on the road from James Ingalls, inn-holder, to the meeting-house" in 1760—having previously married Alethea Ripley, a sister of the young minister.

#### IV.

MORTLAKE DISINSTATED. BROOKLYN CONFIRMED. TROUBLES  
IN POMFRET. SETTLEMENT OF MR. PUTNAM.  
GENERAL PROGRESS.

**T**HE society made out of parts of Pomfret, Mortlake and Canterbury remained in great confusion till after the incorporation of Abington. The country around them was rapidly opening; population and business increasing; yet this unfortunate parish was unable properly to administer public affairs or facilitate improvements. Pomfret and Canterbury could not be brought to work together harmoniously

for its benefit, and Mortlake had no town government. The position of this anomalous township was becoming more and more uncomfortable; a manor without a lord; a town without organization or officers; its inhabitants regarded as aliens and intruders, with no rights in Pomfret and no privileges in Mortlake, and not even in capacity for lawful country-rate paying—an entire change in status and administration was imperatively demanded. The inhabitants of the section had never forgotten the town privileges accorded to Sir John Blackwell by the General Court, and now again attempted to secure their confirmation. Pomfret, on the other hand, sought its annexation to her territory. A memorial, informing the Assembly, in May, 1747, "That the inhabitants of Mortlake had hitherto escaped paying country taxes; were conveniently situated to Pomfret, and praying for their annexation," called out the following counter-statement from William Williams and Joseph Holland:—

"That in 1686, a patent was given to Capt. John Blackwell of the land included in Mortlake, for a distinct town, which was afterward renewed to Hon. Jonathan Belcher; by both which acts the privileges of a township are as well secured to the possessors or proprietors of said land, and their independence upon any other town as fully declared as to the proprietors of any town in the Government. The southern part was annexed to parts of Canterbury and Pomfret as a distinct ecclesiastic society, and has been at proportionable charge in building meeting-house and keeping schools, which shows the readiness of the proprietors of Mortlake to pay taxes, and though the memorialists truly say we have not paid country taxes, it is not from unwillingness but incapacity, not being qualified with proper officers. Yet though the memorialists have desired only that we may be obliged to pay taxes, yet we humbly hope the Assembly will not do it in such a way as to deprive us of the privileges of a town, which they have repeatedly granted, and hope, instead of annexing them to any other town, you would annex parts of other towns to them; that is, the north of Canterbury and south of Pomfret, now included in said society, which land is mostly made up of that tract between the towns, and afterward divided among them."

Consideration of these memorials was deferred till the following May, and again earnestly urged upon the Assembly. The general dissatisfaction at the exemption of Mortlake from tax-paying, was manifested somewhat violently, by Richard Adams, Moses Smith, Joseph Davison, Zechariah Spalding, Simon Cady and others, who declared, "That Belcher had sold his land to Godfrey Malbone, William Williams, Israel Putnam, William Earle, Joseph Scarborough, William Sumner and Robert Freeman; that said persons had always been freed from paying country rates, and had had the usual proportion of school money, and that it was only right and reasonable that they should pay their part of the rate and pay their way." Hezekiah and Nathaniel Huntington were appointed a committee to examine the case, and reported, it is said, in favor of a new township. Renewed efforts were now made to secure confirmation. A meeting of the "society taken out of Pomfret," &c., was held, August 29, 1748, when the inhabitants

expressed their "desire to be annexed to, or incorporated with, the inhabitants of Mortlake into a township, of such form as the Hon. Assembly should judge convenient." Lieutenant Smith, Captain Cleveland and Benjamin Pierce of Canterbury; Major Holland, Lieutenant Bacon and Joseph Davison of Pomfret, were appointed committees to see if their respective towns "would consent that this society, with Mortlake, be made a distinct town, and if they do not consent they shall be cited to appear before the Assembly, and give their reasons." Their applications were unsuccessful. Pomfret was at this time involved in sectional commotion, her western inhabitants seeking for society, her southern for town privileges, and she would listen to neither. Major Holland's appeal to the Assembly was equally fruitless. That body decided to erect the parish of Abington, and was unwilling to subject Pomfret to farther curtailment. The petition for a township was positively rejected, and the north half of Mortlake annexed to Pomfret's first society—a result that pleased no one but the inhabitants of that section, who preferred even this connection to total isolation. The grievances of the complex society were not in the least abated while Pomfret was as much dissatisfied with her gain as with her losses, and vainly petitioned to have the north half of Mortlake removed from being part of her first society. Wearied out at length with inconveniences and disabilities, "the suffering inhabitants of the north of Canterbury and south of Pomfret" were glad to accept of relief upon any terms, and once more appeared before the Assembly, showing:—

"That about twenty years since, the Assembly set off the south part of Pomfret, north part of Canterbury and town of Mortlake, to be a distinct society, and that we have ever since enjoyed society privileges, and said Mortlake consists of about twenty inhabitants, who have most of them considerable farms and improvements and large stocks of cattle and horses, and that they have always been free from paying country rates, which makes a great difficulty in said society, for their not being annexed to any town, and there being no convenient highways, and cannot be compelled to lay out nor mend highways, and the law is that there shall be a sign-post near the centre of each town in this Colony, and that there is no sign-post that is or can be in said society according to law, and Mortlake has always had her proportion of school money, and has never paid any rate, and we ask Assembly to annex her to Pomfret, and that they pay rates and have a sign-post erected.

Ezekiel Bowman.	Isaac Allyn.	Benjamin Fassett.
Henry Smith.	John Fassett.	Phineas Smith.
Matthew Smith.	Benj. Hubbard.	Josiah Cleveland.
John Pike.	Peter Adams.	Thomas Mighill.
Isaac Adams.	Richard Adams.	Ebenezer Pike.
Reuben Durkee.	John Farr.	Ebenezer Spalding.
Eph. Woodward.	Josiah Fassett.	Benj. Pierce.

Oct. 2, 1751."

The Assembly thereupon once more took the circumstances of Mortlake into consideration, and in May, 1752, thus enacted:—

"Whereas, the plantation or town of Pomfret, when first granted and



patented, included in it, with other lands, a tract of 5,740 acres, now called Mortlake, which tract was after that, according to a division among the proprietors of said town, patented to John Blackwell, one of the proprietors, and in said patent to him it is said the said tract should be one entire town, whence it has been frequently called a township by the name of Mortlake, and by that means the inhabitants have claimed an exemption from Pomfret, by reason of which many disputes and difficulties have arisen, and, whereas, there appears to be no grant or resolve of this Assembly for dividing the said tract from Pomfret, or for making the same a township of itself, and it also appears that the same, upon latter application to this Court, hath been confirmed or patented to said Pomfret, without any regard or pretence of its being a township—therefore, this Assembly is of opinion that Mortlake ought to belong to Pomfret, according to the true intent and meaning of the original grant, and that it is not a distinct town by itself, and to prevent all future mistakes, and for promoting and preserving due order and regulation, it is resolved, that this tract of Mortlake shall be accounted, taken and doomed to belong to Pomfret.”

Thus, after so many years of independent existence, Mortlake manor was dis-stated and merged in Pomfret township; its inhabitants willingly resigning their manorial privileges for orderly town government and ability to pay country taxes. “The society taken out of Pomfret, Canterbury and Mortlake” could now levy rates in all parts of its dominion, and rejoiced in its liberty to erect the much-coveted sign-post, and in the new name of Brooklyn, which, by special Act of Assembly, replaced its former elongated and inconvenient appellation. This society was now in a prosperous condition, having repaired the breaches caused by the Separate agitation. Population had increased largely throughout its borders. Numerous descendants of the first settlers—Adams, Cady, Spalding and Allen—filled the places of their fathers. A third Richard Adams succeeded to the family homestead upon the death of his father, in 1746. Peter Adams, Jun., upon his marriage in 1750, built himself a house in new clearings in the east part of the farm.

The society, with all its disabilities and disadvantages, had not neglected public improvements during this period of agitation. Its one school-house on the green had been very elaborately finished, with ceiling of pine boards, double floor below and single one in the chamber, chimney lined with brick as high as the mantle-tree, three windows glazed, a convenient writing-table, benches to sit on and a lock. Daniel Tyler was employed to mow the burying-place in season to kill the bushes. Israel Putnam, after his adventure with the wolf, had risen in popular favor, and, on condition of mending the glass in the meeting-house, was allowed with John Hubbard, Daniel Tyler and Benjamin Pierce, to replace the hindmost seats below with pews for their private use, “if they spile not above two seats on a side.” The work when done was accepted by the society, and Putnam, Tyler and Uriah Cady appointed soon after to seat the meeting-house. Jonas Cleveland, Ebenezer Hubbard, Caleb Spalding and Leonard Cady were

also allowed to build a pew over the stairs, "if they finish it within a twelve-month."

After the formal addition of Mortlake, greater school accommodations were needful. In 1752, it was voted, "To divide the society into four districts from the centre—the meeting-house being the centre—with north and south, east and west lines for the keeping of schools; also, that a school be kept in five places; at each place an equal part of the time for schooling, viz.: 1, at the Widow Cleveland's, or Benjamin Hubbard's, or near thereabouts; 2, at Leonard Cady's; 3, at Mr. Dimon's, or near there; 4, at Samuel or William Williams's; 5, at the school-house." The glass of the meeting-house again becoming dilapidated, it was also voted for this year, "To board up the meeting-house windows."

The prosperity of Brooklyn Parish under the new *regime* was greatly checked by prevalent sickness and mortality. A pleuratic distemper in 1753, was followed in 1754 by a malignant dysentery, especially fatal to children. Scarcely a family in Windham County escaped the scourge. Two children of Rev. Abel Stiles; three of Rev. Marston Cabot, were among its victims. In Brooklyn, where it raged with great violence, about seventy deaths were reported. Mr. Avery, still apparently the only medical practitioner in the vicinity, ministered day and night to the sick and dying till he was himself prostrated and overcome by the disease. The death of this excellent minister was greatly mourned. The Rev. Ebenezer Devotion, in his funeral discourse, describes him, as "calm, peaceful, patient, open-hearted, free of access, sociable, hospitable, cheerful but not vain, capable of unshaken friendship, not a wit but very judicious, not of the most ready and quick thought but very penetrating." He left a widow and eight children.

The bereaved society, after voting to give the estate of their late pastor "in proportion to his ministry for the present year," secured the services of Mr. Josiah Whitney, a native of Windham County—born in Plainfield August 11, 1731; graduated from Yale College in 1752—who had just completed his ministerial studies with Rev. James Cogswell of Canterbury. After a satisfactory "acquaintance with his ministerial accomplishments," a call was extended, which was thus accepted:—

"To the society of Brooklyn in Pomfret.

Gentlemen,—Whereas on the 17th of Nov. last, you proceeded to give me a call to settle in the work of the Gospel ministry with you, and proposed a hundred and twenty pounds, lawful money, for a settlement, and sixty-five pounds, lawful money, for a salary—I do now hereby accept said proposal, and may the Lord bless us and lead us in the way everlasting.

Brooklyn, Jan. 7, 1756.

JOSIAH WHITNEY."

The church unanimously concurring in this call, Wednesday, Feb. 4, was appointed for ordination. The widow of their former pastor,

now married to Mr. John Gardner of Gardner's Island, was requested "to provide for the ordination council and other ministers and Mr. Whitney's friends, at the society's charge," receiving a hundred pounds for this service. The day being very fine and the congregation much too large for the meeting-house, the ordaining services were held on the Green, ladies using their fans as freely as at Midsummer. All the neighboring ministers were present on this memorable occasion. Mr. Rowland of Plainfield opened the services with prayer; Mr. Cogswell preached from II. Timothy ii: 15; Mr. Stiles offered the ordaining prayer; Mr. Mosely gave the charge; Mr. Devotion the right hand of fellowship; Mr. Cabot offered the closing prayer.

With the new minister, new church regulations were adopted. Saybrook Platform was accepted as the rule of discipline and Watts' Psalms allowed to be sung the last singing on Sabbath. Stephen Baker was chosen deacon. Major Holland and Thomas Mighill were appointed to join with Deacons Williams, Davison and Baker in hearing complaints, and were soon called to sit in judgment upon one of their own number, charged with drinking to excess in the house of Captain Putnam. The accused was acquitted but public opinion was not satisfied. It was scarcely decorous to decide such a case without ministerial counsel, and the Rev. Messrs. Mosely, Devotion, Cogswell, Rowland and Ripley were summoned to consider it, who pronounced the offender "not guilty of a censurable evil." A little excess of that nature among brother officers in time of war was not to be judged too harshly.

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The old society of Pomfret was still dissatisfied and divided. Ere she had become reconciled to the loss of territory and church members, she was called to part with her excellent minister, who, on March 28, 1753, just one month after officiating at the ordination of Mr. Ripley, fell a victim to malignant pleurisy. Mr. Williams had occupied a high position among the clergy of his day and was greatly esteemed for strength of character and soundness of judgment—"a plain and faithful preacher of the great and important doctrines of Christ; a wise, judicious, sound orthodox minister." His funeral sermon was preached by Rev. Samuel Williams of Lebanon. The society assumed the charge of his funeral expenses and provided an appropriate monumental tablet. His pleasant homestead descended to his son Ebenezer, a man of worth and weight of character already intrusted with important public offices. His son Chester, settled in the ministry at Hadley, died in 1755. These sons showed their respect for the memory and wishes of their fathers, by petitioning the Assembly, that the will, not completely

executed by reason of his sudden death, might be confirmed and carried into execution.

A new minister was now needed as well as a meeting-house. Dr. Mather, Deacon Holbrook and Joshua Sabin were chosen committee to provide for preaching. Breaches outside and inside the meeting house were repaired. The society also agreed to complete the fencing and cleaning the burial-place, ordered twelve years before, and directed its committee, "To take y<sup>e</sup> care of getting it fenced and cleaned, and let it out to some person to pasture for five and seven years." John Warner was appointed to dig the graves. Efforts were soon resumed for more permanent settlement. At a society meeting, March 21, Captain John Daniels was chosen moderator, and the following questions propounded:—

"1. Whether the inhabitants of said society will resettle the Gospel? Ans. Yes.

2. If said society will build a meeting-house for public worship, and set it on the centre of the present, or on the nearest common place thereto? No.

3. Whether they will settle any gentleman already heard? No.

4. Whether they will try any more on probation? Yes.

5. Whether to petition for removal of north half of Mortlake, and recover the line formerly prayed for between Abington and this society? No."

At the following meeting, June 20, it was voted by a great majority, "That we did think it necessary to build a meeting-house, there being one hundred for, and but nine against it." Affairs now looked more promising. Thomas Cotton and Captain Daniels were appointed agents to ask for a committee from the County Court to affix the place. Captain Noah Sabin, Thomas Cotton, John Williams, Seth Paine, Jun., Captain John Grosvenor and Ebenezer Williams were chosen to wait upon this committee, which after due consideration set up a stake, "on the road leading from the old meeting-house to Woodstock, ten rods south from Zechariah Waldo's barn—the stake to be encompassed with the sill of said new meeting-house." A majority of the society refused to accept this site and the great question was still unsettled. In a ministerial candidate they had been more successful. Noadiah Russel, Jun., of Middletown, had preached through the summer, and October 16, was called to the pastorate by a great majority. £1,500 settlement, and £650 salary were offered him, stated at the rate of three pounds ten shillings a dollar. Mr. Russel, accepting these terms, February 26, 1755, it was voted, "To proceed to ordination." Ebenezer Williams offering to provide for ordination council and give the same to the society, the same was accepted with hearty thanks, but all these preparations and provisions came to naught. The increasing dissatisfaction with the meeting-house spot led the society to defer ordination, and difficulties arose. Mr. Russel objected to the lack of an explicit church covenant, whereupon the brethren of the church, March 5, 1755, voted,



"That the Rev. Solomon Williams should draw a plan of church discipline." The plan was drawn, read and accepted, but still matters were not settled. The society agreed to give Mr. Russel sixty-five pounds, lawful money, find his wood and cart it, but this was not accepted. Negotiations ceased, and Mr. Russel withdrew. Foiled in all its efforts, the society again sought relief from the Assembly, showing:—

"That we have considered the necessity of building a meeting-house, voted the same, and applied for committee from County Court, who fixed a spot not satisfactory. More than one half dissatisfied; does not accommodate equally as to distance, being only about a mile east from the dividing line between us and Abington, and three and a half miles from east line of society, and many more inhabitants live east than west of said place. Place very miry and wet and incommodious for a meeting-house; tried to get a new committee, but Court refused and determined to hold good and firm, and valid what the committee had done. Greater part of the society uneasy, and cannot well proceed to settle any minister, but very much, if not altogether, on that account, a young gentleman that has been some time in probation and had a call, and society very unanimous in their good opinion and esteem, but by reason of their considering the place for meeting-house so unreasonable the ordination was put off, although before appointed, and thereupon he has left society, and refuses to settle among us unless matters should be farther settled. We, therefore, pray for relief and another committee, that the society may again hear the voice of peace and a settled minister.

*May 12, 1755."*

Dr. Thomas Mather acted as agent in presenting this petition, and secured for a committee Christopher Avery, Zebulon Webb and Joseph Spicer. John and Ebenezer Williams, John and Samuel Lyon, William Sumner and Eleazer May were appointed to wait upon this new committee, who selected for a site, "the home-lot of Zechariah Waldo, near to highway." Still the people were dissatisfied. The northern and eastern settlers preferred a more central location, and again the matter of building was deferred.

Meanwhile, a minister was secured and settled. Aaron Putnam of Reading, a Harvard graduate in 1752, received a unanimous call from the society, November 17, 1755, and replied, February 8, in the words of Elihu, Job xxxiii: 6, "Behold, I am according to thy wish in God's stead: I also am formed out of the clay." The terms of settlement were similar to those offered to Mr. Russel. The church concurred in the call, and voted, "To settle on Saybrook regulation for a rule of church discipline." A committee of five was chosen to go with Mr. Putnam to confer with the reverend ministers of the Windham Association, and take advice about settlement. A fast was observed, February 25, when two sermons were preached and Mr. Putnam examined by seven ministers as to his ministerial qualifications. These proving satisfactory, despite the extreme youth of the candidate, who had but just entered his twenty-third year, the ordination day was appointed. Deacon Ebenezer Holbrook's offer to entertain the ordination council at his own cost, was accepted with thanks. Mr. Putnam was ordained

March 10, 1756, just five weeks after the ordination of Mr. Whitney in Brooklyn. Twelve ministers were present, with their delegates. Rev. Solomon Williams was moderator; Ebenezer Devotion, scribe; Rev. Mr. Gleason of Dudley offered the first prayer; the sermon was preached by Mr. Mosely; Mr. Rice of Sturbridge offered the ordaining prayer; Solomon Williams gave the charge; Mr. Devotion, the right hand of fellowship; Mr. Stephen Williams of Woodstock, the last prayer, and the sixty-eighth Psalm was sung in conclusion. So acceptable was the sermon that it was voted, "To have it published, each person that paid tax to have one copy."

A minister settled, it was voted in February, 1757, "To proceed to build a new meeting house." The Assembly accepted the report of its committee, and resolved, "That the place so fixed upon shall be the place for building meeting-house;" but still the people murmured and lingered. Propositions were made to call out another committee, and even to divide the society, but were not supported. Again, in 1760, they repaired to the Assembly, declaring "That the inhabitants were not at rest; thought that if the place could be removed some considerable distance farther north it would better accommodate the north and east inhabitants, and be more agreeable to the society in general, nearest the centre of travel and interest"—but their pleas were disregarded. Farther resistance was useless. June 16, 1760, the society voted, "Not to apply to the Assembly for another committee, but to proceed and build the house, and also to buy two acres of land on which to set the house." Deacons Ebenezer Holbrook and David Williams, Ebenezer Williams, Lieutenant Durkee and Ebenezer Grosvenor were appointed committee for building; Ebenezer Williams, Nathan Frink, and Gershom Sharpe to purchase the land. It was voted, "That the house should be sixty feet long; forty-eight wide and twenty-four or twenty-five feet stud; also, to raise sixpence on the pound of the ratable estate, to defray expenses." Under these instructions, the two acres specified were purchased of Zechariah Waldo, and a meeting-house frame successfully raised on this site, September 5, 1760.

In the matter of schools the society was now settled, having been divided in 1755, into four school districts, each providing its own school-house and master.

Pomfret, at this period, despite the trials of its first society, was a very thriving and prosperous township, with three well-established, self-supporting religious societies, and the once lawless and irregular Mortlake peacefully incorporated within her borders and made amenable to lawful rate-paying and road-making. The inhabitants of the three parishes united harmoniously in promoting the general interests

of the town, and bore their proportionate share of public charges and services. Its position in the new Probate District, erected in 1752, increased the business and importance of the town. The towns of Pomfret, Woodstock, Ashford, Mortlake, Union and the two north societies in Killingly were made one District of and for a Court of Probate, to be called the District of Pomfret. Timothy Sabin of Pomfret was appointed judge of this Court; Pennel Bowen of Woodstock, clerk. The original records and papers of this Court were unfortunately consumed by fire with the dwelling-house of Mr. Bowen, on the night following January 5, 1755. Nathan Frink, a young attorney, then just commencing the practice of law in Pomfret, was then appointed clerk, and the succeeding records retained in that town. A memorial from Judge Sabin and Attorney Frink represented their loss to the Assembly, whereby many people were likely to be great sufferers, and prayed it to grant relief and repair the want of said record and files. Ebenezer Williams was appointed judge of Probate in 1759.

The United Society for Propagating Christian and Useful Knowledge still retained its place in popular favor. As the fathers passed away, the sons succeeded to their rights and interest in this cherished institution. New members were received, from time to time, into the company. At a regular meeting, August 27, 1753, at the house of Samuel Sumner, John Williams was admitted in the room of Jacob Dana; Ebenezer Williams, in the room of his reverend father, Ebenezer Williams, deceased; Nath. Holmes, in the room of his father, Jehoshaphat Holmes, deceased; Israel Putnam, upon his paying sixteen pounds, old tenor. Joseph Holland, Timothy Sabin, Thomas Mather and Seth Paine were also admitted to twenty-pound rights. It was voted, "That the Library be kept for the future by Mr. Ebenezer Williams till it should be ordered otherwise. That Timothy Sabin, Esq., be added to the committee. That the committee view the books and see what state they are now in, and get them mended if they judge needful, at the charge of the Company, and, hereafter, that the library-keeper, from time to time, do the same. That Doddridge's Paraphrase be purchased, if it can be had. That the committee lay out the rest of the money subscribed for books, at their discretion." The books thus obtained were less exclusively theological than the preceding, embracing *The Spectator*, *Young's Night Thoughts*, *Telemachus*, *Potter's Antiquities*, and a *History of the World*.

At a meeting of the proprietors of the Library, June 10, 1756, Mrs. Abigail, wife of Mr. John Parkhurst, of Pomfret, was admitted to their number. Rev. David Ripley, Captain Zechariah Spalding, William Prince, Seth Paine, Jun., Joseph Scarborough, William Sabin,

Josiah Chandler, Joshua Sabin, Joseph Chandler, Jonathan Waldo, Samuel Dana, Jun., James Ingalls, Rev. Josiah Whitney, Rev. Aaron Putnam, Thomas and Samuel Williams, Gershom Sharpe, Nathaniel Carpenter and Jonathan Dresser, were also admitted. Messrs. Ripley, Putnam and Whitney, the three young ministers of the three parishes, were added to the committee. It was now voted, "That those inclined to be admitted members of the society, upon their paying four dollars to the committee, should be entitled to a twenty-pound right and be admitted members." Abijah Williams and John Davison were soon afterwards received upon such payment. Major Holland resigned his right to Isaac Sabin; Dr. Mather to Joseph Scarborough. The only non-resident received into the company was Rev. Noadiah Russell, admitted in 1758, after his settlement in Thompson Parish. Rollins' Ancient History in twelve volumes, Lowman upon the Civil Government and Ritual of the Hebrews, Roman History—Questions and Answers, Boston's Fourfold State, Evans's and Erskine's Sermons, and Hervey's Meditations and Dialogues were now added to the Library, with Thompson's Season's and Dampier's Voyage, for light reading. These various books, heavy and light, were thoroughly read and pondered, and aided not a little in diffusing knowledge and stimulating intellectual activity. Pomfret was distinguished at this period for general intelligence and cultivation. An unusually large proportion of her young men were led to seek a collegiate education and prepare themselves for professional life. In 1755, eight young men from Pomfret families entered Yale College, i. e., Ebenezer Craft, John Chandler, Ebenezer Grosvenor, Ephraim Hide, Joshua Paine, Abishai Sabin, Joseph Sumner and Ezra Weld. These students were accustomed to ride to New Haven on horseback in company, young Oliver Grosvenor going with them to take back the string of horses. Joseph Dana entered Yale in 1756, and John and Ephraim Avery, sons of the deceased pastor, the following year—so that *eleven* young men from this one township were cotemporary collegiates—an instance rarely paralleled in towns of its population. Nine of these young men became ministers and achieved very respectable positions. John Avery, crippled by disease, devoted himself to teaching.

The literary proclivities of Pomfret were not incompatible with military spirit. Her active participation in the French War and the notable achievements of Putnam, Williams and others, will be detailed hereafter.

Dr. Thomas Mather, first physician of Pomfret, is believed to have removed his residence prior to 1760. His place was filled by Dr. David Hall, son of Rev. David Hall of Sutton, so that Pomfret was now



served by young ministers, physicians and lawyers. Mr. Putnam married Rebecca, sister to Dr. Hall. Dr. William Walton practiced at this date both in Pomfret and Killingly. Dr. John Weld is also numbered among Pomfret physicians, but at what precise date has not been recovered.

## V.

### PROGRESS IN KILLINGLY. AFFAIRS IN MIDDLE, SOUTH AND NORTH SOCIETIES.

THE large township of Killingly was also occupied by three religious societies—Thompson Parish on the north, the old or first society in the centre, and the south society, with churches on Break-neck Hill and in the southeast quarter of Killingly. After the accomplishment of society division, the original church hastened to reorganize. During the long meeting-house controversy, its numbers had diminished, and its strength declined. No regular religious worship had been maintained, though baptisms had been occasionally administered by neighboring ministers. A son of one of the constituent members of the church now accepted a call to its pastorate. A public service was held, November 29, 1745, conducted by Reverends Ebenezer Devotion and John Campbell, and the scattered church members solemnly renewed their covenant, agreeing:—

“That we have taken the Lord Jehovah for our God, will fear him, cleave to him, and serve him; bind ourselves to bring up our children in the knowledge and fear of God and in special by orthodox catechism; to keep close to the truth of Christ, taking the sacred Scriptures as the only rule of faith and practice. Declare ourselves a church of Christ according to Congregational principles as laid down in Cambridge Platform, saving that instead of ruling elders, we will from time to time, choose two or more of the principal brethren to be helps and assistants to our pastor for the time being in managing the prudential affairs of the church, and also to be present with our pastor at the examination of candidates for our holy communion, which candidates being approved shall exhibit in writing or otherwise a relation of their experiences publicly on the Lord's Day before the church and congregation in order to their being admitted to full communion.

Joseph Leavens, Sen.	David Roberts, Jun.	Andrew Philips.
Joseph Leavens, Jun.	Samuel Buck.	Ephraim May.
Thomas Moffatt.	John Brown.	Benj. Leavens.
Daniel Whitmore.	Ebenezer Brooks.	John Leavens.
Joseph Cady.	Francis Whitmore.	Thomas Mighill.”
David Roberts, Sen.	John Roberts.	

This covenant was also signed by Rev. Perley Howe, pastor-elect, who was soon afterwards installed in office. He had previously been pastor of the church in Dudley, Massachusetts, and was married to

Damaris, daughter of Captain Joseph Cady. No record is preserved of his pastorate, but he is said to have been "a highly respectable and useful minister."

Measures were at once taken towards building the meeting-house, the location of which had caused such contention and division. Captain Daniels, Jonathan Dresser and Penuel Deming of Pomfret, were appointed a committee by the County Court, who selected a site on the apex of Killingly Hill, about a fourth of a mile north of the old house, "east side of the country road, right against Noah Leavens' dwelling-house." This site being accepted and an acre of land given by Justice Joseph Leavens, the following request was presented:—

"To the gentlemen of the town of Killingly, assembled in town-meeting on the first Tuesday of Dec., 1745; especially the gentlemen of Thompson Parish, with the rest of said town—the memorial of the inhabitants of the First and Middle Society of the town of Killingly, humbly sheweth:

That whereas the Hon. Gen. Assembly at their session were pleased to divide the old society into two societies, and we being the standing society wherein the old meeting-house is, and we being minded to build a new meeting-house for divine worship, and knowing that the old meeting-house was built by the whole town, and they always using said house for their public meetings—we therefore humbly pray that we may have liberty to pull down the old meeting-house, and use it to and for the finishing of our new frame for a meeting-house; always provided, we make the said new meeting-house fit to meet in, and always allow the said town-meetings and freemen in said house, and any other town business they shall see cause to use said house for.

*Killingly, Dec. 3, 1745.*

It was then put to vote, whether they would grant the foregoing prayer and order the same to be put on record, and it passed in the affirmative."

The old meeting-house was accordingly speedily demolished and the new one erected,—a spacious, commodious edifice, probably superior to any in the County. It had three great double doors, opening east, west and south; large square pews, furnished with lattice-work, a high pulpit and sounding board; galleries, front and sides, with rising seats and wall-pews in the rear and two flights of broad stairs leading to them. With this elegant church edifice, and an acceptable minister, the first society of Killingly regained its former prestige and position. Joseph Cady, Hezekiah Cutler, Thomas Wilson, Joseph Richard, Samuel Bloss and other leading citizens included within the limits of Thompson Parish, now represented to the Assembly, "That the worship of God was regularly attended at a convenient meeting-house which would be much less trouble for them than to go to Thompson, where the distance was so great and roads so bad that a great part of holy time must be spent in very servile labor to man and beast, and at some seasons it was impossible for themselves and families to be convened there, and begged to be transferred to Killingly"—which was granted. The church also increased in numbers and was apparently prosperous during the ministry of Mr. Howe, which was terminated by his sudden death, March 10, 1753, in his forty-

third year. He left four young sons, who lived to maturity—Isaac Cady, Perley, Joseph and Sampson. His successor, Aaron Brown of Windsor, a graduate from Yale College, in 1749, was offered September 10, twelve hundred pounds, old tenor, in settlement, and forty pounds, salary, which was to be increased forty shillings a year till it reached fifty pounds. Mr. Brown accepted these terms, in consideration "of the unity and good agreement and the generous encouragement given for his subsistence," and after the usual preparatory service of fasting and prayer, he was ordained, January 19, 1754. David Rowland of Plainfield, offered the first prayer; Marston Cabot preached the sermon; John Campbell offered the ordaining prayer and gave the charge; Charles Gleason of Dudley, the right hand of fellowship; Nehemiah Barker, the closing prayer. Mr. Brown soon after married the widow of his predecessor and occupying the pleasant homestead purchased by Mr. Howe, enjoyed a tranquil and successful pastorate. Mr. Fisk, the former pastor, was one of his constant hearers, having built himself a pew in the new meeting-house and bearing his part in all society charges. Joseph Cady, Samuel Buck and Ephraim May were society committee at the time of Mr. Brown's settlement. Peter Sabin served as collector; Benj. Cady as clerk; Benj. Leavens, treasurer. The society was divided into three districts, each maintaining its own school. Killingly Hill was now becoming a noted public centre, the appointed place for town meetings and "trainings;" the head and heart of the large town with its three organized societies. Dr. Thomas Moffatt was still its practicing physician. John Felshaw kept its popular house of entertainment. Justice Joseph Leavens, though advancing in years, was still active in public affairs. James Leavens, Peter Aspinwall, Isaac Cutler, Ephraim Warren, Nell Alexander, George Blanchard, and many others of the first settlers of Killingly, were now deceased, and their places filled by their sons and immigrants from other towns. The southern extremity of Killingly Hill, long held by the heirs of John Allen, was sold in 1746, to James Adams of Barrington, Rhode Island, for £2,500, and upon his decease soon after, reverted to Ebenezer, Edward and Michael Adams. Samuel Buck bought land of Ebenezer Adams in 1756, and settled upon it. The homestead occupied as a parsonage by Reverends Perley Howe and Aaron Brown, "near the old pound," adjoining Dr. Moffatt's and Noah Leavens', was purchased of Joseph Cady in 1746. Five hundred acres north of Chestnut Hill line, were sold by the heirs of John Knight "to Ebenezer Larned, innkeeper," son of William Larned of Thompson Parish, in 1750. Mr. Larned was afterwards deacon of the church and an active member of the society. His wife, Judith, daughter of Justice Leavens,

was also greatly respected for intelligence and sound judgment. Six sons of Isaac Cutler occupied farms in this vicinity, living in gambrel-roof houses, all of the same size and style, built for them by their father. A grand-son, Hezekiah, had early settled in life, marrying Susanna, probably daughter of Hanniel Clark, a lady of great personal beauty and strength of mind, with education in advance of her time. Among other notable women of this generation in Killingly were *eight* daughters of Joseph Leavens, happily married in their native town. Four of these sisters married four sons of John Hutchins, and occupied contiguous farms between Killingly Hill and the Centre. After the death of his first wife, Judith Sabin, Justice Leavens married the widow of William Larned.

The south society of Killingly, though exceeding the first in numbers and ratable property, was less harmonious and prosperous. After the erection of its meeting-house on Break-neck, a church was organized there, and Nehemiah Barker ordained its pastor. Mr. Barker had previously preached as a candidate in West Woodstock, and was married in 1746, to the daughter of Joshua and Elizabeth Chandler of that parish. Nothing can now be learned of the discipline or progress of this church, owing to the destruction of its records, but it is evident that it was never very flourishing, that the feuds from which it sprung were never healed, and that it did not succeed in gaining a permanent footing. This failure may be attributed, in part, to the loss of its chief member, Captain Ephraim Warren, who died in 1747, and, also, to the spread of Separate principles. A number of the residents of the south-east section organized as a Separate church, and others of Chestnut Hill united in a Six-Principle Baptist church. These secessions so weakened the church on Break-neck, that Mr. Barker was forced to complain to the Windham Association in 1749, "of want of proper support and influence." Councils and consociations were unable to suggest effective remedies, and after struggling a few years, Mr. Barker was dismissed from his charge, and removed to Long Island. The church in Killingly, after three years vacancy, united in choice of Mr. Eden Burroughs of Stratford, who was ordained its pastor, January 23, 1750. Mr. Burroughs was an eminently pious young man, greatly respected by his contemporaries, but was unable to build up a church under such unfavorable circumstances.

The Separate church in South Killingly increased in numbers and influence, and though obliged for a time to help support worship on Break-neck, was able to build a meeting-house and maintain their own minister, Mr. Wadsworth. In 1755, twenty-three brethren of this church petitioned the south society for release from further rate-paying.



The answer to this request is, probably, the sole record of this society now in existence:—

“Voted. At a society meeting, June 23, 1755: That this society is free, and willing, and it is our desire, that the Honorable Assembly dismiss and discharge those and every one of those persons petitioning from any further charge in this society.”

A copy of this vote was forwarded to the Assembly by the clerk of the society, with the significant endorsement, “When the above-written vote was passed, y<sup>e</sup> petitioners did not get *my vote*.” As, notwithstanding this declaration, it appeared that the vote was “considerably unanimous and freely granted,” the petitioners were “freed and prohibited from paying further rates in said society, and also from voting”—being the first Separates in Windham County, and probably in Connecticut, who obtained exemption from parish charges. The church, thus relieved from its “great and distressing difficulties,” grew more and more prosperous, and was able to exercise and enforce all needful discipline. Its members were united in doctrinal views and regard for their pastor, although one sensitive brother was obliged to ask dismission, mainly on the ground, “That he had not a freedom towards Mr. Wadsworth, and if he had not a freedom had as lief support the old constitution.” By vote of the church, communion was interchanged with the Separates on Chestnut Hill.

The general affairs of the town were apparently prospering. A new sign-post was ordered to be set up by the new meeting-house on Killingly Hill, whereon all warnings and notices were duly posted. Deacon Dresser was empowered in 1749, “to bye waits” for the town. The south bound of the town was perambulated and restated. Roads and bridges required re-viewing and repairing. A road was laid out in the south of the town, to accommodate the inhabitants traveling to the south meeting-house, beginning on Voluntown line, “near the road now laid to the sawmill standing on Moosup,” and extending to the bridge over Whetstone Brook. A bridle-road was also laid out from Daniel Waters’ to the south meeting-house, and the road over the north side of Chestnut Hill leading “to where the old meeting-house stood” was turned east of Enoch Moffatt’s house, over a brook, to the new house of worship. A road was completed directly from Providence to the south part of Killingly in 1750, and a new bridge built over the Quinebaug, near Captain Samuel Danielson’s. A committee was thereupon appointed to lay out a convenient road through the town from this bridge to the Providence highway. A road was also laid out from this convenient bridge northeast, to Five-Mile River; also, one from the old burial-place to the new meeting-house on Killingly Hill, and others in different parts of the town. A committee was appointed,

December 1, 1754, "to view and survey our country roads, and take quit-claim deeds of all the persons who owned lands where the roads cross." The road from Plainfield to Massachusetts line through the town received especial attention. Quit-claim deeds were received from John and Joseph Wyman, Ezra and Silas Hutchins, Willard Spalding, Samuel Danielson, Daniel Waters, Boaz Stearns, Daniel Davis, and many others. The length of this road, as thus surveyed, was found to be seventeen miles  $250\frac{1}{2}$  rods. The meeting-house in the first society was only  $99\frac{1}{4}$  rods from the centre of the township.

In 1757, a road was laid out from Danielson's bridge to Voluntown line, near a saw mill called John Priest's. The bridge built by Samuel Cutler over the Quinebaug at the Falls, was next examined by the selectmen and found "rotten and defective, and not safe to pass over." It was then voted, "To build that part of the bridge that belongs to Killingly to build, Edward Converse to build it and proceed speedily to do the same." Pomfret's part was also accomplished in due time. Killingly was greatly disturbed in 1759, by the discovery of a gang of counterfeiters within her borders, engaged "in the vile crime of aiding in making counterfeit bills of credit." A son of one of her most respectable citizens was implicated in this affair, convicted, and sentenced to perpetual confinement. A large number of his fellow townsmen interceded in his behalf, viz.: Joseph Leavens, Jonathan Clough, Henry Green, Thomas Whittemore, Jacob Dresser, Nathaniel Brown, Penuel Child, Samuel Porter, John Leavens, Edward Converse, Josiah Mills, Lusher Gay, and Samuel Larned: showing, "that they had known him from a child, and known him to be honest and regular, and took care of his aged father and mother to as good acceptance as could be, and was in good credit among his neighbors, as little mistrusted as any young man in town, and were of opinion that he was over-persuaded by evil-minded persons." Through these representations, and his own declaration that he had been importuned by a certain Frenchman and others, the prisoner had leave granted him by the Assembly "to remove to Killingly and there dwell and remain."

Thompson Parish continued flourishing and prosperous, having increased to that degree according to the testimony of a non-resident, "that it was richer than both the other societies." Its fathers and founders were fast passing away. Deacon William Larned died in 1747. Deacon Jonathan Eaton, Simon Bryant and Joseph Cady, Sen., in 1748. The first minister of Woodstock, Rev. Josiah Dwight, also died this year. A very serious calamity befell his son, Captain John Dwight, February 18, 1750. His house was consumed by fire, the family escaping from their beds with only the clothes that covered them. One negro servant perished in the flames, together with all

their "household goods, clothes, corn, meat, books, bonds and notes of hand." A committee was appointed by the General Court to look into the case and grant relief, which ordered the payment of notes due Captain Dwight upon sufficient evidence. Even with this aid the loss was so heavy that Captain Dwight's estate was seriously encumbered at his death, in 1753. His widow removed to New Haven, where some of his children had previously settled. Theodore, the youngest child of Rev. Josiah Dwight, died the same year. He left two young sons, who retained possession of the Dwight homestead, west of the Quinebaug. Samuel Morris, Sen., died in 1745. His son Samuel occupied his homestead a few years, and in 1752, was released from paying rates to Thompson Parish and allowed to unite with the first society in Woodstock. In 1755, he sold a large part of his fine farm upon the Quinebaug, purchased of Governor Dudley, to Benjamin Wilkinson of Smithfield, Rhode Island, for £20,000, and removed from the town. Other well-known farms were changing owners. "The place called Nashaway," between the Quinebaug and French Rivers, long owned and occupied by Captain Sampson Howe, was sold by his son Sampson in 1746; the eastern part to Thomas Converse, the remainder to Ebenezer and Joseph Nichols of Middletown. Mr. Sampson Howe then removed to Middletown. Samuel Barrows bought land west side of French or Stony River, in 1752; Robert Prince, the same year, bought land east side the same river of John Stone. Joseph Ellyott of Sutton, in 1752, bought a large tract of land adjoining French River, bordering on Prince's and Nathaniel Crosby's—and divided it between his sons, Joseph and Francis. Samuel Narramore, at about the same date, gave a deed of "the land he lives on" to his son-in-law, James Dike. Progress had also invaded the Quinнатisset hill-top, so long left to the meeting-house and tavern. A blacksmith's shop was already in operation. In 1754, Samuel Watson of Leicester, purchased of Hezekiah Sabin for £160, "eight acres northeast from Thompson meeting-house on the Boston road—line running northeast to a swamp, with a road two rods wide passing through it." This purchase included the northern extremity of Thompson Hill, which was then in all its native wildness. Mr. Watson at once put up a small house and made some clearing, but so much of his land was still incumbered with forest that Mrs. Watson is traditionally reported to have lost her way in the woods in attempting to go to meeting. The southern extremity of the hill was then occupied by John Corbin, who sold dwelling-house and barn, with thirty acres of land, to Colonel Hezekiah Sabin in 1757. Colonel Sabin and Edward Converse, a mile southward, still continued "to entertain" the public at their houses.

The church in Thompson lost several of its members by defection

to the Baptists and Separates, but received numerous accessions from newly-arrived settlers. Jacob Dresser was appointed deacon in 1746; Simon Larned and Lusher Gay were chosen to that office in 1747. Deacon Dresser served for many years as clerk of the society. The meeting-house was still carefully cherished and required for many years little alteration, save pews here and there in waste places, and windows cut to enlighten them. Better school accommodations were now demanded. In 1752, James Converse, Michael Adams, Henry Green, Samuel Porter and Jacob Dresser were chosen committee. Samuel Barrows, William Whittemore, Nathaniel Child, John and Samuel Younglove, in the west of the parish, were allowed to have a school among themselves and their proportion of school money. In 1757, Zechariah Cutler and the Widow Hannah Porter were allowed a school in the northeast corner; line to begin at Ezekiel Green's, thence east to Rhode Island and north to Massachusetts line. Squire Hascall, David Alton and others were accommodated with a school westward, bounds extending two and a half miles in breadth, and south "to, or near Luke Upham's house." That none might trespass for lack of proper knowledge of law, law-books were ordered to be lodged in ten houses for the use of the society. A second military company was now organized in the north of the parish.

The keeping up the credit of the ministers' salary, in the demoralized condition of the currency, was attended with some inconvenience. In 1751, five hundred pounds were found needful; four years later, another hundred pounds were added and sixty-five pounds allowed for firewood. Mr. Cabot's death occurred a few months afterward. While engaged in the usual public ministrations upon the Sabbath, he fell insensible upon his pulpit stricken with apoplexy; was removed to his house, but died in a few hours, April 8, 1756. Mr. Cabot was a man of superior talents and learning, greatly beloved and respected by his people. He left several published sermons of much literary merit. More than three hundred members were added to the church during his ministry. The funeral charges were borne by the society, and "suitable gravestones" procured by them. Mrs. Cabot, with her nine children, remained for a time upon her homestead.

Jonathan Clough, Jacob Dresser and Hezekiah Sabin were commissioned by the society to supply the pulpit. Of many candidates heard, Noadiah Russel was selected, who had previously gained such favor in Pomfret. July 28, 1757, the society called Mr. Russel "as their teacher, offering £165 settlement, and £65 salary, and a sufficiency of cord wood till he comes into family estate, and then thirty cords a year." Mr. Russel thus replied:—

"Gentlemen,—I was in hopes to have had the satisfaction of seeing you



together at your meeting and of giving you my answer by word of mouth; but through bodily indisposition am unable to do that. And how Providence will deal with me is uncertain; but what appears present duty we are to perform and leave the event. I would, therefore, in the first place return you my thanks for that respect you have shown me in so unanimously desiring me to settle with you in the work of the ministry, and in offering so generously for my encouragement to and support in that important business. Secondly, I would signify to you that considering your unanimity, and consequently the prospect that there is of my being comfortable among and serviceable to you, if I should settle with you, I accept of your invitation and offer.

*Aug. 30, 1757."*

The preparatory fast was held, October 5, and ordination effected, November 9,—Mr. Russel's father preaching and giving the pastoral charge. His brother from Windsor, Putnam from Pomfret, and Gleason from Dudley assisted in the services. Mr. Russel soon settled "in family estate," marrying Esther Talcott of Middletown, and occupying the pleasant house on the brow of the hill, built by John Corbin and purchased of Colonel Sabin. Deacon Jacob Dresser soon afterward settled near him, buying land of John Grosvenor, adjoining Daniel Russel's and Thompson's, in 1759, and building a capacious mansion on a rise of land, southeast from Mr. Russel's.

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## VI.

### PLAINFIELD. VOLUNTOWN. CANTERBURY.

THE difficulties in Plainfield, occasioned by the separation in the church and settlement of Mr. Rowland, continued many years, to its great hurt and damage, "dividing and separating very friends and brothers." After the lamented death of Mr. Stevens, the Separate church was for three years destitute of a pastor, but continued to meet together and maintain public worship. A committee was then chosen to treat with the Separate church in Voluntown—then greatly "reduced by a mortal sickness, whereby several of the principal members were removed,"—with reference to the union of the two churches under the ministry of the Voluntown pastor, Rev. Alexander Miller. The Voluntown church, about to lose other valuable members by emigration to Wyoming, readily complied. A day of preparatory prayer and fasting was observed; the neighboring churches called together in council, and the Separate churches of Plainfield and Voluntown formally united—the Rev. Paul Park of Preston, preaching a sermon suitable to the occasion. The church thus enlarged, strengthened, and provided with a faithful minister, was able to maintain its standing, and occupied a very creditable position.

The energies of the first church were mainly absorbed in collecting rates from the town and prosecuting its various lawsuits. A large majority resisted every effort to carry on the worship of God according to the laws of the Colony. The payment of Mr. Rowland's salary was persistently refused, and when, by some chance, a vote was passed to repair the meeting-house, the town refused to pay for it, or even to appoint an agent to defend itself against the action of the committee. It was found very difficult to induce any person to serve as collector; selectmen chosen also refused to serve, and all town affairs were thrown into inextricable confusion. After many years of strife and contention, Thomas Pierce and James Bradford were appointed, by a great majority, agents for the town, to represent to the General Assembly, "our difficulty concerning Mr. Rowland." These gentlemen recapitulated the facts of the case; the passage of a vote granting a salary to Mr. Rowland, when but a small number of voters were present, and his settlement in opposition to a protest of the majority, so that the majority was obliged to pay their proportion of his salary when they never covenanted to do it, nor had they the least grounds to believe that things would ever be better, and prayed to have the vote voided—but their prayer was refused. Attempts to compromise with the church party were equally unsuccessful. Pierce, Bradford, Stevens, Wheeler and Marsh were delegated to confer with Mr. Rowland, an ecclesiastic council was called—but nothing effected. Again, in 1759, the persevering Separates appealed to the Assembly, declaring that they could not in conscience comply with the vote, nor with the ecclesiastic constitution of the Colony, which they thought not warranted by the Word of God or by the Charter of the Colony, and praying for relief and liberty to support the Gospel in their own way, or if not granted, liberty of an appeal to the King in Council. Again, their requests were refused, and new bills of costs allowed Mr. Rowland. Unable to gain relief from Government, they appealed with renewed earnestness to their fellow-townsmen, and were partially successful. Wearied out with strife and litigation, the minority consented to forego its claim and release the town from its obligation to maintain Mr. Rowland. At a town-meeting, April 7, 1760, it was voted "to have two distinct societies." Benjamin Wheeler, Captain Thomas Stevens, James Bradford, James Howe and Captain Isaac Coit were appointed a committee to take town affairs into consideration, and the following memorial was prepared, "agreeable to every inhabitant."

"Whereas, a considerable number have dissented from the established worship in town, and have gathered into church estate agreeable to Cambridge Platform: and have provided themselves a meeting-house and minister whom they have supported though they have never been exempt from ministerial

charges, which have occasioned great difficulties; inhabitants looked upon it as unreasonable that our dissenting brethren should be taxed to maintain the established minister—whereupon, we have mutually and unanimously agreed, if it shall please your Honors, to be two distinct societies; that two-thirds of our ratable estate be continued to support the established worship, exclusive of what is paid by law as Baptists, and that the third part be appointed to maintain the worship of God amongst our dissenting brethren, and that the dissenting church shall be set off, and that such as appear constantly to attend said worship shall be set off by a committee—which, we apprehend, will be for our mutual tranquility, and both our societies will be well able to maintain the gospel among themselves, without infringing upon each other.”

Upon the presentation of this memorial by Benjamin Wheeler and Captain Stephens, the Assembly ordered Jonathan Trumbull, Hezekiah and Jabez Huntington, to repair to Plainfield, inquire into the matter, and take a list of inhabitants. This committee found matters justly represented in the memorial, excepting that considerably *more than one third* of the inhabitants were opposed to the established worship, and supposed to have an equal right to the privileges of the new society. They therefore took the names of all such persons, and recommended that the amount to be raised to make up the two-thirds rate allowed to the first society, be raised upon them all, and in case the second society neglected or refused to pay demands of the first society within one year, they should forfeit their society privileges and be as they were before. This agreement was very unsatisfactory to the Separates, compelling them to pay rates both for their own and the town minister, but as it was doubtful if the Assembly would give their sanction to any other, they consented to it, “as the best they could do.” The committee, thereupon, reporting in favor of division, Plainfield was divided into two ecclesiastic societies by act of Assembly, not according to territorial lines but ecclesiastic preferences, the first society to have two-thirds and the second, one-third of the ministerial rate.

This settlement was soon followed by the dismissal of Mr. Rowland, who had valiantly maintained his ground throughout the long controversy, bringing suits for the recovery of his salary down to the moment of agreement. It was supposed that he would continue minister of the first church and society now that the Separates were set off who had been thought the great cause of division, but upon the first meeting of the first society it was found that a large number of his former adherents favored his removal. “Not that Mr. Rowland had done anything unbecoming, but because of the unhappy uneasiness still subsisting,” which it was feared could not be allayed without a change in pastoral relations. The church was at first very unwilling to part with a leader who had ministered so faithfully and fought so bravely for them, but finally passed a vote, with great reluctance, for his dismissal, and called a council of ministers, which, considering the difficulties and

deep-rooted prejudices, dissolved the relation—"having nothing against Mr. Rowland, and recommending him to other churches." In his farewell discourse, which was thought worthy of publication, Mr. Rowland very touchingly reviewed the trials of his unhappy pastorate, which he attributed to that spirit of discord from the arch-enemy, censuring the constitution of the Government and the more common method of ministerial support, exclaiming against the churches as anti-Christ and Babylon; rulers, as ruling for Baal; teachers, as teaching for lucre. This spirit of rancour, bitterness and division had risen to great height, he averred, in the days of his honored predecessor, and were the unhappy means of bringing his gray hairs with sorrow to the grave, and had since made most prodigious progress, so that there were few whose minds were not soured and become cold in their affections towards the ministry. His own support had been extremely difficult, no way to attain it but by mere dint of law, which he had been compelled to try many years with reluctance; had spent the prime of his life among them, and still there was no prospect of times being better, and he had consented to leave them. With great earnestness and affection, he adjured his people to avoid for the future "schismatic conventicles," and prayerfully unite in promoting the good of the church and the growth of Christ's Kingdom. Mr. Rowland removed to Providence after his dismissal, ministering to the Congregational church in that town. The first church in Plainfield did not succeed in settling a pastor, and gradually wasted in strength and numbers, while the Separate church continued to increase under the ministry of Mr. Miller.

The general progress and prosperity of Plainfield were greatly marred by these religious dissensions. Town meetings were chiefly occupied with discussing rates and executions, and very little attention given to roads, schools and other public institutions. Certain French prisoners < billeted upon them in 1756, were not, however, neglected. These were some of the Neutral French, inhabitants of Acadia, torn from their homes and native country after the conquest of Nova Scotia by the English, and distributed among the towns of New England. Forty-three of these unhappy Acadians were assigned to Windham County by Act of Assembly, but only Plainfield appears to have made public provision for them. Loads of wood were allowed to Frenchmen; money paid for going to Norwich for Frenchmen's beef; for doctoring the Neutral French and for keeping Pierre Meron's cow—showing that whatever their sufferings elsewhere, in Plainfield they were not uncared for.

In May, 1747, the towns of Plainfield, Canterbury, Killingly, Pomfret and Voluntown were constituted one entire district for holding a Court of Probate, to be known by the name of the district of Plainfield,



and Timothy Pierce appointed its judge. Upon the death of Judge Pierce, John Crery succeeded to this office, and upon his decease in 1759, Jabez Fitch of Canterbury was appointed. All the original settlers of Plainfield had now passed from the stage. Among the new inhabitants were John Dunlap, admitted to town privileges in 1759; Joseph Eaton, buying land of Smith in 1758, and Dr. Elisha Perkins, son of Dr. Joseph Perkins of Newent Society, Norwich, who commenced practice in Plainfield about 1759. Plainfield was well supplied with physicians at this period. Dr. Edward Robinson was already established in practice, and Dr. Gideon Welles, a graduate of Yale College in 1753, administered to the wants of the sick both in Plainfield and Canterbury. Another son of Plainfield, John Shepard, was graduated from Yale in 1748, and died the following year. Josiah Whitney, of the class of 1752, was now the settled pastor of Brooklyn Parish.

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Voluntown, during this period, made little progress and was chiefly occupied with ecclesiastic controversies. Attempts were made to divide the town into two religious societies. In 1746, a committee was chosen to consider the difficulties in respect to pastor and church government and the manner of settling them, but effected nothing satisfactory. Liberty was, however, granted to the inhabitants south of Pachaug River, and, also, to those north of the Providence highway, to hire a minister for themselves through the winter, or for four months of the year. During the remainder of the year they were obliged, with other inhabitants, to pay assessments for the support of Mr. Dorrance. As a majority of the town were opposed to his ministry, they refused to allow for the depreciation of currency, and would only pay the hundred pounds originally stipulated, so that Mr. Dorrance, like Mr. Rowland, could only obtain his lawful dues by legal process or appeal to the Assembly. In 1746, Robert Dixon was appointed agent to defend the town against the petition sent by Mr. Dorrance, but did not succeed in procuring release. Robert Dixon, Isaac Gallup, Robert Campbell, Thomas Kasson and others, were appointed on committees, year after year, to treat with Mr. Dorrance, answer memorials, and represent the town in various ways in this unhappy affair. In 1751, the town voted to give Mr. Dorrance three hundred pounds for his salary, if he would discharge the town from any further demand, and on some such basis the matter was finally adjusted. The predilections of the church were still strongly Presbyterian. In 1760, the question of church government was again agitated. Mr. Dorrance preached a sermon upon the divine authority for elders; their qualifications, &c., after which, the

church voted "to remain Presbyterian," and chose for elders, Samuel Dorrance, Esq., John Smith, Robert Dixon, Ebenezer Dow, John Kasson, Charles, James and John Campbell, Noah Briggs, James Dorrance and Samuel Gordon. A council subsequently called pronounced the proceedings of the church at this time, "not illegal but too hasty," and advised a new election of eight elders. The unpopularity of the church was doubtless aggravated by this distinct avowal of Presbyterianism. A majority in the town were dissenters from the established church, either Separates or Baptists, and conscientiously opposed to the church and its aged pastor. According to Dr. Samuel Peters (whose testimony is, indeed, of very little value), the Voluntown Presbyterians met with as little Christian charity and humanity as Ana-baptists, Quakers and Churchmen, and sober Dissenters would not attend the funeral of a Presbyterian. The Voluntown Separates united, in 1758, with the church of Plainfield. Obadiah Rhodes and other Baptists were allowed to unite with the Baptist church in Stonington.

Very little can be learned of the secular affairs of the town. Schools were managed by committees in the south, central and north sections. A committee was also chosen "to remove obstructions so that fish can pass up Moosup's River." The vexatious boundary and land disputes were now settled, and proprietors' meetings no longer needed. The unfavorable location of the town, its inconvenient form, poor soil and bitter religious dissensions, greatly impeded its progress and discouraged its inhabitants. The question of emigration was early discussed and considered, and many of its most valuable citizens were already preparing to remove to a more genial habitation.

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Canterbury like its neighbors was very seriously affected by the Separate agitation, and its progress greatly retarded. After the withdrawal of the Revivalists and the ordination of Mr. Cogswell, the standing church (as it was called) increased in numbers, and enjoyed a fair degree of prosperity for many years. Mr. Cogswell, though so obnoxious to the Separates, was very acceptable to that part of the church and society which had put themselves under his care, and greatly respected abroad for prudence, piety and learning. In 1746, Stephen Frost was chosen deacon in place of Timothy Backus, who adhered to the Separates. Edward Raynsford, John Fitch and Captain Gideon Cobb were chosen a committee to go to Deacon Timothy Backus and others who had separated from the church, to relate to them the affairs of the church respecting church records and vessels. The records were retained by the Separate church, and the communion

service divided between the two bodies. During the ministry of Solomon Paine, members of the established church continued to fall away to the Separates, assigning as reasons:—

- “ 1. That the church denies the power of godliness.
2. That they call them out of the way of understanding and persecute them, who are of the true church.
3. That they don't love one another.
4. The pastor being unfaithful, particularly in not visiting enough.
5. The law of the Colony, that a minister should not preach over his parish line, without consent.
6. Texts of Scripture: Solomon's Songs i: 7, 8; Acts x: 13, 15; Nehemiah x: 13, 14, 15, and many others.”

These reasons appearing insufficient to the church, and the refractory brother and sisters refusing to make any acknowledgment, they were excommunicated after proper effort. By vote of the church, the pastor had liberty to invite any orthodox minister of the Gospel to preach in the place on any proper occasion. In 1747, it concurred with the printed articles, sent forth by Windham Consociation. In 1753, Dr. Watts' Psalms were allowed to be sung in public in the afternoon service.

After the death of Solomon Paine, the Separate church was unable to find an acceptable pastor, and diminished in numbers and influence. In 1757, Joseph Marshall of Windsor was chosen to be their pastor, and, in spite of some opposition, was ordained over it, April 15, 1759. “Deacon Obadiah Johnson made the first prayer; our beloved brother, Paul Parks, gave the charge; Bliss Willoughby, the right hand of fellowship; Alexander Miller of Plainfield made the last prayer—all according to the rules of the Gospel, and with the aid and assistance of the Holy Spirit.” One of the first acts of the church under the administration of the new pastor was to consider the case of a sister of the church, “found guilty of a breach of a Divine Rule, in that she had usurped authority over the church, in that she did in a church meeting, authoritatively teach and admonish the Lord's church, contrary to the Word of God: I. Tim. ii: 12. I. Cor. xiv: 34—for the which things the church did solemnly admonish her to repent of her sin, that she might be restored in the fellowship of the Gospel.” But though so strict in discipline, the church itself did not escape censure. A number of its brethren, wearied out with fighting rate collectors, proposed to rid themselves of this intolerable burthen, by organizing as a distinct society. This admission that the Government of Connecticut had any right whatever to order church affairs, was entirely contrary to their proclaimed opinions, and called forth a storm of indignation from other Separate churches. Ebenezer Frothingham of Middletown, in particular, felt bound to express his great grief and astonishment, “that this Canterbury church, where there had been so

much light shining respecting Christ's Kingly power and dignity, as the supreme and only Head of the church, and such knowledge of the abominable tyranny that the religious constitution of Connecticut held forth over the church of Christ, should bow to this iniquitous and ungodly constitution, and consent to that thief, that had robbed the church of her right and set bounds for all the churches in Connecticut, and would not allow any liberty but in those bounds, so that Christ himself must bow and be confined to parish lines." With great pathos and plainness, he reminded them of their former glorious position, and besought them not to seek relief from present burdens by bowing to an unrighteous Constitution, formed against the rule and Government of the Son of God. But the heroic spirit which once had animated the Canterbury Separates had died with their early leaders, and no appeal or remonstrance could awaken their former enthusiasm and self-devotion. Yielding to the wishes of many of their fellow-townsmen, and their own yearning for peace and pecuniary relief, a number of the Separates united, in May, 1769, with other inhabitants of Canterbury, in asking for those society privileges which they had once so proudly spurned, and were exempted from farther payment for the support of Rev. James Cogswell.

In town affairs there were no especial changes. A committee was appointed in 1753, to view sundry private ways supposed to be needful for roads for people to pass and repass from place to place without trespassing on one another's property, "especially by the way crossing Quinebaug River, known as Shepard's fordway," passing through land owned by Shepards, Spaldings, Adams and Paines. Dr. Jabez Fitch, now a leading citizen, was appointed "to take care of y<sup>e</sup> cedar swamp in the south of the town." In 1755, a committee was appointed to receive and transport provisions of meat, grain, &c., brought in to pay country taxes. Joseph Woodward of Windham was allowed the privilege of a dam across Little River, on condition of erecting a good cart bridge over it, "so often as the same should be carried away by reason of waters being flowed by said dam." The Quinebaug River, which had given so much trouble to the early settlers, was not yet reduced to proper subjection. In the severe freshet of 1757, the bridge was partially destroyed, and a serious casualty occurred in repairing it. David Nevins, an active and respected citizen, who had resided for ten years in Canterbury, while standing on a cross beam, giving directions to the workmen, lost his balance, fell into the swollen stream, and was swept away by the current. He left five young children, who afterwards settled in Norwich and its vicinity.

Very few new families were now arriving in Canterbury. Lands and homesteads were mostly occupied by descendants of first settlers. Of



the three branches of the Adams family which had settled in this town, Joseph Adams, Sen., died in 1748; Henry Adams, Sen., in 1749; the second Samuel Adams, in 1742, and a third in 1769. Numerous scions of these three branches were now in active life. Jabez, son of Dr. Jabez Fitch, was now practicing as an attorney, was made justice of the Quorum in 1755, and judge of Probate in 1759. Dr. Gideon Wells of Plainfield, removed his residence to Canterbury, and enjoyed an extensive practice in both townships. Col. John Dyer was still active in public affairs. His son, Ebenezer, was graduated from Yale College in 1750, and died in 1757. John Felch of Canterbury was graduated from Yale in 1758, and remained at home, filling various public offices. John Felch, Sen., died in 1754. The aged parents of Mr. Cogswell removed to Canterbury after his settlement there, and died in a few years. Rev. James Cogswell married Alice, daughter of Dr. Jabez Fitch. Like many ministers of his day, he was accustomed to receive pupils into his family, fitting young men for college and the ministry. Naphthali Daggett, afterwards president of Yale College, enjoyed for half a year "the faithful grammar instruction of Mr. Cogswell." A later pupil was one Benedict Arnold of Norwich, then a bright little fellow, full of play and pranks—the recipient of many letters of counsel and warning from his excellent mother. Rev. Josiah Whitney of Brooklyn Parish, completed his theological studies with Mr. Cogswell.

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## VII.

### DISMISSAL OF MR. BASS. DISTURBANCES IN ASHFORD.

**A**FTER the settlement of Mr. Bass, Ashford enjoyed a brief interval of peace and quiet. In 1747, a committee was appointed to view the meeting-house, and see what ought to be done. New doors, new clapboards, a new window-frame for side of the meeting-house, and much repairing of glass, was found needful. A penny rate was thereupon granted, and Robert Knowlton empowered to employ men for that purpose. Mr. Knowlton was now one of the chief men in Ashford, serving as moderator at all town meetings, and contributing freely of his substance for the good of the town. He was especially interested in the improvement of its schools, and when chosen deputy to the General Assembly in 1751, begged the privilege of bestowing fifty shillings upon the school, instead of expending it in the customary

"treat." In the spring following, he gave twelve pounds, old tenor, to the school. The Corbin land-claim still continued to harass the town. After the death of James Corbin, this land fell to his son-in-law, Benjamin Marey of Woodstock. March 31, 1750, a vote was procured in town-meeting, "That all the land owners in Corbin's claim that have kept up their bounds that were laid out to them, shall hold all the land within said bounds, be it more or less." A large number of the inhabitants of the town—Isaac and Joshua Kendall, Robert, Daniel and William Knowlton, John Wright, Joseph Works, Thomas Tiffany, Nathaniel Eaton, John Chapinan, Jacob Dana, James Hale, and many others—dissented from this vote:—

"1. Because the town had no right to convey the land without liberty from Assembly.

2. Because many of these bounds were so large that they infringed upon the town commons to a great degree.

3. Presuming against our legislator.

4. Many of the voters were inhabitants of Willington, allowed so by the memorialists, and yet allowed to vote."

This remonstrance did not procure the annulment of the vote. Robert Knowlton, Nath. Eaton and Captain James Hale (son of the first pastor) were thereupon appointed to take care of the common land.

Mr. Bass continued for some years to preach acceptably to his people, and was apparently in good standing with his ministerial brethren, taking an active part in meetings of Association. That he was less tenacious of ministerial prerogatives than some of his contemporaries may be inferred from the following "agreement" as to matters of discipline:—

"We consent and agree as to this method following—both Pastor and brethren to proceed for the future after the manner of a mixed administration, in which the concurrence of Pastor and brethren shall be necessary towards perfecting any Act; and whenever any difficulties arise in the church, which the church shall judge proper to refer to a Council, we will send for such a Council as we can agree in. *March 10, 1747.*"

The orthodoxy of Mr. Bass, though established by Consociation, was still somewhat suspected by the more rigid of his hearers. According to his own statement, he was "of the Calvinian class" at the time of his ordination, but was so imprudent as to examine anew the foundation of his faith, and so came into a new and different scheme or set of notions. Though careful at first not to speak of this change openly, his leaving out of his public performances those notions peculiar to Calvinism was soon observed by some of his eagle-eyed people, and new jealousy aroused. A sermon, advising them to a careful unprejudiced inquiry after the will of God, as revealed in the Bible, and not to content themselves with a religion at second-hand, increased the

uneasiness. A church-meeting was asked for, to which Mr. Bass responded, "That as the people were generally in a ruffle, t'was best to defer calling them together till they were cooler, and so fitter for action." This displeasing the aggrieved, the following letter was presented:—

"Reverend Sir: These are to let you know that we, the subscribers, think you cannot but be sensible that there is great uneasiness among us on account of some principles that you and some others hold, as we think, which appear to us very dangerous. We, therefore, humbly desire that you would forthwith warn a church meeting to look into the affair; if not, you will put us under a necessity of taking some other course.

Theophilus Clark.  
Jonathan Baker.  
William Chub.

Benjamin Walker.  
William Watkins.  
Nathaniel Eaton.

James Bicknell.  
Zechariah Bicknell.  
Jacob Dana.  
Jedidiah Dana."

In pursuance of this request, a church meeting was called, January 23, 1750, when Mr. Bass and his adherents made the subjoined declaration:—

"We, the subscribers, being desirous to maintain peace and concord in the church of Christ, and always ready to contribute, according to our power, towards the removing of such difficulties as arise among us, Do now say:

1. That we do really believe the Scriptures both of the Old and New Testament to contain the truth of God—and that therein are contained all that God requires of men to believe and do, in order to their enjoying his favor in this world and that to come.

2. As we apprehend our church-covenant to be agreeable to the Scriptures of Truth, we yet adhere to it, and to every article of it.

3. We esteem this to be a true Church of Christ, purchased by his own blood, and are really desirous of continuing in the communion of it.

4. We are sensible there be different sentiments among us about the meaning of some scripture passages, and different sentiments we are apt to think there always will be among men, while in the present state of frailty and imperfection.

5. As we claim the liberty of judging for ourselves in matters of religion, so we are ready to grant the same liberty to every member in the church, and to every man in the world; and while we impose not upon any one, we hope none will be so unchristianlike as to impose upon us.

6. We stand ready to converse freely with this church and every member of it, upon any article of religion whatsoever; and we hope every one in this church is open to conviction, and ready to receive truth upon real evidence, as we trust we are ourselves.

John Bass, Pastor.  
Edward Tiffany.

Timothy Eastman.  
Nath. Spring.

Thaddeus Watkins.  
John Pitts.  
John Perry."

This declaration, Mr. Bass reports, "was not in the least satisfactory;" indeed, it was even "hissed at"—and these specific objections presented:—

"Rev'd Sir. These are to let you know the grounds of our uneasiness. In the first place. We think you are gone from what you profest to the Council that ordained you in the matter of Original Sin. You then profest to believe, That it was not only our infelicity, but our sin, that we fell in Adam; and now you seem to hold only the depravity, and deny the Guilt; it appears to us by your preaching, praying and conversing; 1. In your preaching you neglect to preach of the doctrine of Original Sin, and the necessity of the New-Birth, as we find recorded in John iii, where are Christ's own words; and you seem

to lay the chief stress of our salvation on our moral obedience, (we hold Obedience necessary, as the fruit and effect of Faith); but in the matter of Justification to have no part. II. You don't preach up the doctrine of election as it is recorded in Romans ii: 5, 6, and multitudes of other texts that plainly point out our Personal, Absolute, Eternal Election; also the doctrine of Particular Redemption, and doctrine of Perseverance; which are doctrines plainly set forth in the Word of God, and necessary to be preached by every minister of Christ, as fundamental articles of the Christian Religion; in which we say you are very defective. Again, when some signified their uneasiness with one or two of the brethren for denying the above-said points, you seemed to justify them, by preaching from Acts v: 38, 39. Also a further confirmation of your holding the same principle is, When you baptize children you don't so much as mention one word of the child's being guilty of Sin, or of Christ's blood being applied to the mystical washing from Sin, or any other words, that represent the child being guilty of Original Sin. Again we say, that in your conversation you discover the same principles, while you approve of and plead for Mr. Taylor's book, that so plumply denies the doctrine of Original Sin. Now from all these things, we think neither your preaching nor your principles are good.

James Bicknell.  
Nath. Eaton.  
Theophilus Clark.

James Hale.  
William Watkins.  
Joseph Snow.

Samuel Snow.  
Benjamin Snow.  
Jacob Dana.  
Jedidiah Dana."

After reading these charges, "this sifting question" was propounded to the suspected minister—"Sir,—Don't you think that a child brings Sin enough into the world with it, to damn it forever?"—to which Mr. Bass frankly responded, *He did not*. This acknowledgment was sufficient evidence of doctrinal dereliction. The church thereupon proceeded to vote, "That it held the doctrine of Original Sin, as set forth in the eighteenth question and answer of the Shorter Catechism, an essential condition of church fellowship and communion"—thus cutting off their minister from church fellowship. His deposition from office was effected as soon as possible. After much preliminary sparring, Mr. Bass waived his right to refer the matter to a council, and allowed it to be brought before the Windham Consociation, March 12, 1751. That body decided, that in spite of the agreement between church and pastor, it had a right to consider the case. Captain Watkins, Jacob Dana and other aggrieved brethren, declared, "That Mr. Bass had departed from the Confession of Faith given to the church previous to his ordination, and from the doctrine of Original Sin as set forth in the Catechism; denying a Covenant made with Adam for himself and his posterity; and was also deficient in teaching the doctrines of particular Election, particular Redemption, Effectual Calling, and the Perseverance of the Saints." Mr. Bass conceded that he *had* altered his opinions, and that the particulars objected against him were in general, true. The Council advised him to use all proper methods to obtain light upon these matters, and also advised the Eastern committee of the Association to discourse with Mr. Bass in order to give him light, and further that Mr. Bass should repair to the next meeting of Association and they do endeavor to give him light and recover him, but if all



these methods failed to enlighten and recover, then the Association was to summon the Consociation for final\* decision. Mr. Bass very willingly complied with these suggestions, but none of the arguments offered on behalf of the Calvinistic Faith seemed to him conclusive. A minority of the church shared his sentiments and faithfully adhered to him. About thirty of his friends, by a writing under their own hands, desired the matter settled by a council mutually chosen, but were overruled by Association. The Consociation was again summoned, June 4, 1751. A very large assembly was present. Mr. Bass offered a paper, giving an account of his sentiments, repeated the principles objected against him, with the reasons thereof; and also declared, that if the people in general were not desirous of his continuance in the ministry among them, he was willing to be dismissed from them, desiring the mind of the church might be known. Two-thirds of the brethren present then declared their desire for his dismissal. The council finding that the sentiments and principles of Mr. Bass were very different from those avowed by him at his ordination, which difference they apprehended to be a departure from the true doctrine of the Gospel and also from the principles to which the generality of his church adhered, adjudged it a sufficient ground for the dissolution of the pastoral relation, and did accordingly dissolve the pastoral relation of Mr. Bass to the church and people of Ashford. Mr. Bass objected to this decision in that it represented him as willing to receive dismissal if a majority of the *church* desired it, whereas he had expressly insisted, That the congregation should have a voice in the matter as well as the church, and had brought them before the council for that purpose, but the privilege was denied them. The relation was dissolved, and Mr. Bass made this closing entry within the church records:—

“June 5, 1751. I was dismissed from my pastoral relation to the church and people of Ashford, by the Rev. Consociation of the County of Windham, for dissenting from the Calvinistic sense of the Quinquarticular Points, which I ignorantly subscribed to before my ordination; for which, and all of my other mistakes, I beg the pardon of Almighty God.”

A committee was immediately chosen, “to provide with good advice a man to supply the pulpit,” and the selectmen empowered, with Ensign Benjamin Sumner, to make up with Mr. Bass, or stand trial at law. The payment of £250, old tenor, satisfied all demands without legal process. Mr. Bass remained a few months in Ashford, writing and publishing “A True Narrative of an Unhappy Contention in the Church, at Ashford, and the several Methods used to bring it to a Period.” He then removed to Providence, where he was employed to supply the pulpit of the First Congregational (now Unitarian) church.

He left a strong party in Ashford. John Perry, John Pitts and other leading citizens had adopted his principles, and now manifested much

hostility to the ancient church and also to the church establishment of Connecticut. Efforts to unite in choice of a minister were wholly fruitless. The anti-Calvinistic party, mostly residents in the east part of the town, desired to be set off as a society, and having obtained consent from the town to have one-third of its territory, thus made known its desires and position to the Assembly, September 22, 1753:—

“Whereas there is such a difference of sentiment between the Church of Christ in this town and ourselves respecting sundry controverted points, viz., Original Sin, the extent of Christ's Redemption, and the Freedom of man's will: said church being attached to the Calvinistic sense of the above articles, and having by an overt act made the belief of the doctrine of Original Sin, as explained in the Westminster Assembly's Shorter Catechism, an essential term of Christian fellowship and communion, while we are professedly of the opinion that the Calvinistic sense of the same is without sufficient foundation in Holy Scriptures, and upon this account we cannot comfortably unite with said church in the stated worship of God, and also that this church doth adhere to the Saybrook regulation of church discipline which we can no longer submit to—we beg the Assembly two things—

I. Liberty for ourselves and others that see fit to incorporate into a religious society formed as follows:—1. Our only confession of faith and platform of church discipline, be that which Jesus Christ and his Apostles have laid down in the New Testament. 2. That the discipline of the church shall be in the hands of the brethren, its pastor presiding as moderator in all church meetings, whose vote shall equal two persons. 3. Church meetings to be warned by the pastor—he to warn one on request of six brethren. 4. The major vote to be recorded. 5. When in need of a council, *not* to send for Conciliation but an advisory council. 6. Pastor's salary raised annually by voluntary subscription.

II. Exemption from all ministerial taxes raised by the town of Ashford.

John Pitts.	Benjamin Bosworth, Sen.	Alexander Ewing.
John Perry.	Benjamin Bosworth, Jun.	Robert Avery.
Timothy Eastman.	John Griggs.	Joshua Abbott.
Peter Tufts.	Matthew Fuller.	Ephraim Bemis.
John Humphrey.	Edward Tiffany.	John Kies.
Thaddeus Watkins.	Ebenezer Eastman.	David Chaffee.
John Mason.	Jonathan Chapman.	Jonathan Ginnings.
Jonathan Stowell.	Aaron Tufts.	John Laselle.”

This request was refused in both articles, and the town left to work out its own quarrels. The northwest inhabitants, among whom were many Baptists, also petitioned for society privileges, which were denied them by the town. East and west residents then united in representing to the Assembly, “that the lands in quantity and quality were sufficient to accommodate two or more distinct ecclesiastical societies, and the form or lying of township and the settlement of the inhabitants such as would admit of such division as would greatly accommodate inhabitants, many of whom were under very difficult circumstances by reason of distance from place of divine service and roughness of roads.” The selectmen of the town were summoned to give reasons for dismissing this petition, and decision deferred until lands could be surveyed and planned. The town agreed that forty families in the northwest section, comprising over two hundred and fifty persons, should be set off as a precinct or society. A

petition, stating this agreement, and that many of the inhabitants were six, seven and even eight miles from the meeting-house, was preferred in 1758, but again dismissed. Affairs meanwhile were in great confusion. Minister after minister was procured—Daniel Pond, David Ripley, Messrs. Mills and Elderkin, Stephen Holmes, Daniel Kirtland, Nehemiah Barker, Elijah Blake—but all failed to satisfy the people, and so much ill-will and animosity was exhibited that all parties in the town must have been convinced of the *existence* of human depravity, whatever their opinion concerning its origin. At length, after six years of wrangling, Mr. Timothy Allen succeeded in obtaining a call—a powerful and fervent preacher of decided New Light proclivities—and was ordained pastor of the church and town of Ashford, October 12, 1757. The northwest inhabitants also had liberty to have two months' preaching in the winter paid out of the common stock. Many of these inhabitants were Baptists, members of the church in Brimfield. At first, attempts were made to collect rates from them, but it was afterwards voted, "To repay to the Baptists that are exempt by law all that had been extorted from them for support of the ministry, i. e., maintenance of minister and repairing meeting-house." These Baptists continued to increase in numbers and popular favor so that, in 1758, the Ashford church voted, "To offer full communion to all regular Baptist communicants; draw up the offer and make it in the church's name to such Baptists in the town as may attend worship in this place." An attempt to bring back those adherents of Mr. Bass who had withdrawn from church fellowship—Captain Perry, Edward Tiffany, Thaddeus Watkins and others—was not apparently successful. Benjamin Palmer, graduated from Yale College in 1750, was now established in medical practice in Ashford. Theophilus Clark, at whose house the Consociation of 1751 was entertained, had probably then opened on Ashford Green what was long known as the Clark Tavern.

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## VIII.

### FIRST, SECOND AND THIRD SOCIETIES OF WINDHAM. FORMATION OF THE SUSQUEHANNA COMPANY.

UNLIKE her sister townships, Windham was now enjoying much peace and prosperity throughout all her borders and parishes. In 1750, it was ordered, "That a good grammar school shall be kept the whole of every year, by a master able and sufficient for that purpose—school to be kept in each society in proportion to their list. "A

gaol and dwelling-house proper to accommodate the same, with needful appendages," were erected in 1753. A new meeting-house was then in process of erection on Windham Green, under the supervision of Dr. Jonathan Huntington, Nathaniel Wales and Thomas Welch. Mr. Jonathan Bingham, who died in 1751, was greatly interested in this house, not only paying his own proportion of the charges but leaving a legacy of twenty pounds for a bell, and sixty pounds to the poorest persons in the society, towards paying their rates for the building. This house was completed in 1755, and is reported very large and elegant, with a lofty and beautiful steeple, in which was hung the first church bell of Windham County. A clock in the steeple is farther reported by Dr. Samuel Peters. The first church of Windham was less flourishing than at former periods, adding only eighty to its membership between 1746 and 1760. Mr. White was greatly respected for amiability and uprightness of character, but had no marked influence upon the community. The senior deacons of the church, Joseph Huntington and Ralph Wheelock, died in 1747 and 1748. Deacons Eleazer Cary and Ebenezer Wales died in 1757, and their places were filled by Joseph Huntington and Nathaniel Skiff. The widow of Jonathan Bingham, as noted for piety and benevolence as her excellent husband, died in 1756. After fulfilling his numerous bequests for religious and benevolent purposes, she gave "fifty Spanish milled dollars, or an equivalent thereto in passable bills of credit, to be committed into the hands of the Rev'd Mr. Eleazer Wheelock of Lebanon, to be by him disposed of and improved for the education of the youth of the Indian nations of this land, or in propagating religion and learning among them." This legacy was applied to Moor's Indian Charity School, then recently established by Mr. Wheelock. This active laborer,—son of Deacon Ralph Wheelock of Windham,—in addition to the charge of his own parish and extensive itinerating, had early taken Indian boys into his family to train and educate, and thence conceived the plan of fitting them for missionaries among their own people. A house and two acres of land, adjoining his own, were given to Mr. Wheelock in 1754, by Mr. Joshua Moor of Mansfield, and there he established and successfully conducted for many years an Indian Missionary School, assisted by gifts from benevolent individuals like Mrs. Bingham, and appropriations from various public bodies. Another degraded class was remembered and aided by another benevolent Windham lady—Mary Jennings, widow of Richard Abbe. At her decease, in 1759, she gave "unto Ginna, her negro-woman, her time and Freedom, not to be Inslaved, held, or controlled . . . as a slave or servant for Time or life." She also ordered and desired that four negro children named in her inventory, "should be so sold and



disposed of as that they may have Christian education, and by their masters not be used with cruelty and hardship." Mrs. Abbe's Ginna was probably the first slave manumitted in Windham County. Her mistress farther provided for her comfort by leaving her her best feather bed save one, with good bedding, a foot-wheel, a good iron pot and kettle, her every-day clothes, a good silk crape gown and two pewter platters.

The second society of Windham was chiefly occupied for some years with the erection of its second-meeting-house. The large number of families from the southwest of Pomfret which attended worship in the society made this house more needful, and having laid their plans and begun the work, it was greatly delayed and thwarted by the action of the Assembly in 1749, in annexing these inhabitants to the new parish of Abington. The transferred families were themselves equally averse to the change, and continuing their attendance in Canada Parish were soon assessed and called upon to pay rates for building *two* meeting-houses. Benjamin Chaplin and William Alsworth of Abington, then joined with Samuel Butt, William Farman and John Hovey of Mortlake, in petition to the Assembly, showing:—

"That, whereas, by the providence of God, we are situated very remote from the centres of the societies above-mentioned, and are obliged to travel four or five miles to ye public worship of God and other public days, and are so near situated to the second society in Windham that the most remote is not above two miles from their meeting-house, and several within one mile; and whereas two of us were formerly annexed to Canada as to parish privileges, and now to Abington, beg the Court to consider and order us to continue in Canada, by a line drawn, or any way."

The Canada society, having previously voted to accept the inhabitants lying on their east line, either by farms or line as the Court should see cause, farther represented through their agents, Thomas Stedman and Timothy Pearl:—

"That, whereas, the providence of God has made our situation such that there are twenty-six families of neighboring societies, which are constant with us in attending upon the public worship of God, and make about one-fifth of the number of families that make up our congregation, and cannot well attend worship in their respective societies because of their remote distance from their centres; and by means of such a large share of non-residents, we, your Honor's memorialists, are obliged and come into a conclusion to build a meeting-house, which might have been suspended for some years yet, were it not that our neighbors must assemble with us unless it be prevented by large travel, and therefore pray that the families may be annexed to us and admitted training and other privileges.  
May, 1752."

These requests were granted, and the adjacent inhabitants annexed, apparently by *farm* and not by *line*. Jonathan Burnap, Isaac Stiles, Seth Meachem and Jonathan Rogers, all of Windham, were also allowed to join Canada society in 1753. Thus strengthened, the society was able to complete its meeting-house the following year, under the supervision of the younger Thomas Stedman. It was a

well-built, substantial structure, fitted to abide for many generations. On its massive sounding board was inscribed—"Holiness unto the Lord." Thomas Stedman, its builder, though but little over twenty years of age, was already noted for his skill in carpentry, and respected for his sound sense and judgment. His brother, Captain James Stedman, was also a good farmer, carpenter and joiner, manufacturing many "stout wooden clocks, that kept good time." Their sister Mary married Joseph, son of Deacon Benjamin Chaplin, who established himself in the medical practice in Windham Village, about 1755. At about the same date, Dr. John Brewster settled there as a practicing physician, and became a very prominent man in the vicinity. James Howard of Howard's Valley, was also prominent in public affairs. Various descendants of John and William Durkee were now in active life, and were especially concerned with military matters. The Rev. Mr. Mosely continued to gain in influence and authority, but did not succeed in bringing back to the church its refractory members. In 1747, the church voted, "That it looked upon those separating bodies of professing Christians in Plainfield, Canterbury and Mansfield as scandalous and disorderly walkers, and accordingly withdrew communion from them." Thomas Stedman, Sen., was chosen deacon in 1753.

The Scotland society, not having to build a new meeting-house, was able to complete and adorn the one already erected. In 1747, it voted, "To clabord the outside of our meeting-house with oke clabords, and polish the walls within with clay, sand and ashes, and plaster overhead with lime mortar." Jabez Kingsley and other young men, having met with many disappointments in building a pew on the place allotted, had the same privilege confirmed to them and two other seat-mates in 1748. Seven young ladies were also allowed liberty of building. "An Hurlbut, Pashants and Mary Lazelle, Younes Bingham, prudence hurlbut and Jerusha meachem, had liberty to build in the sete behind the front seat in the woman's gallery," November 7, 1752. "Provided they build within a year and raise the pue no higher than the seat is on the men's side, Never ye Less"—saith the chronicle—"Ye above said have built said pue much higher than the order; and if they do not lower the same within one month from this time, the society committee shall take said pue away." These presumptuous young women probably promptly obeyed this mandate, and lowered their pew to conform with their neighbors. In 1755, it was voted, "Whereas, the school-house in the society standeth so near Samuel Silsby's dwelling-house it much discommodes him—that we are willing that said Silsby should move the school-house to any convenient place on the road it now stands on, provided he move it at his own charge and

leave it in as good repair as it now is, and set it somewhere on the highway between where it now stands and Merrick's Brook, or anywhere else where those inhabitants shall agree that send their children to school, and have the advice of Nathaniel Huntington where to set it." In 1758, Josiah Kingsley, Benajah Cary, John Webb, Jeremiah Bingham, Hezekiah Manning and Joseph Woodward were appointed a committee to divide the society into proper school districts. James Brewster was chosen clerk of the society in 1750, in place of John Manning, who had held the office many years. Josiah Kingsley was chosen deacon of the church in 1752; John Cary, in 1754. Deacon Nathaniel Bingham, son of Deacon Thomas Bingham of Windham, died in 1754; his brother, Samuel, in 1760. Mr. Devotion was now in the prime of life, greatly respected throughout his parish and the township, and holding a high position among the clergy of his day. Mrs. Devotion was a lady of much culture and refinement, connected with some of the first families of Norwich. Many daughters, now growing up and entering society, made this pleasant home more attractive. Their only son, Ebenezer, was graduated from Yale College, with the *seven* Pomfret boys, in 1759. Enoch, son of Nathaniel Huntington, was also a graduate in that famous class. He was the youngest of six brothers, remarkable for ability and force of character. Nathaniel, the oldest, was graduated from Yale College in 1747, and settled in the ministry, but died early, "long remembered with unusual esteem and regret." The second son, Samuel, though early noted for his fondness for books and study, was apprenticed to a *cooper*, but so improved his leisure moments that when he had completed his apprenticeship he had not only acquired a competent knowledge of Latin, but had made some progress in the study of Law, in books borrowed of Jedediah Elderkin. Adopting this as his chosen profession, he pursued his studies with indefatigable zeal and perseverance, and was rewarded with abundant success. Before he was thirty years of age he was established in Norwich as one of its most promising lawyers, and had married a Scotland play-mate, Martha Devotion. His brother, Jonathan, without a collegiate education, achieved an honorable position both as a physician and a minister. He was somewhat noted as a humorist and also as a musician, and is remembered as the composer of the once famous round, "Scotland's Burning." Joseph, the fourth son, was destined by his father to succeed to his business as a clothier, but the family genius could not be thus restricted. Moved by a passionate love of books, he, too, devoted himself to study, entering Yale College in 1758, and after his graduation studying for the ministry. He married another daughter of Rev. Ebenezer Devotion,

and settled in Coventry. His brother Enoch became pastor of the First Church of Middletown. The fifth son, Eliphalet, settled in Scotland as a farmer. Two other young men from Scotland Parish were also graduated from Yale during this period—David Ripley in 1749, and Samuel Cary in 1755.

Upon the Willimantic River there was as yet little progress. Grist-mill and iron-works were kept in operation, but no village grew up around them. An effort was made, in 1752, to procure a religious society upon the Willimantic, taking in parts of Windham, Mansfield, Coventry and Lebanon, and extending 255 rods down the river. A petition, signed by Benjamin and Thomas Howard, John More, George Allen, Ebenezer, William and Robert Babcock, and many other residents in that vicinity, was rejected by the Assembly.

Upon the retirement of Judge Timothy Pierce in 1746, Jonathan Trumbull of Lebanon, was appointed judge of the County Court, and continued in office many years. Shubael Conant, John Dyer, Jabez Fitch and Joshua West served as justices of the Quorum. Eleazer Fitch of Windham succeeded Jabez Huntington as sheriff. Samuel Gray was then clerk of the Court; Jonathan Trumbull, judge in the Probate District of Windham. John Ripley was chosen town treasurer in 1750; Samuel Gray succeeded Eliphalet Dyer as town-clerk in 1755. A receiver of provisions for the Colony tax, an excise collector and a packer of tobacco were now added to the town officers. The deputies sent by Windham to the General Court between 1746–60, were—Thomas Dyer, Eleazer Cary, Jabez Huntington, Eliphalet Dyer, Jonathan Huntington, Nathaniel Skiff, Jedediah Elderkin, Nathaniel Wales, Thomas Stedman, Jonathan Rudd, Joseph Kingsbury, Samuel Murdock and Samuel Gray. The physicians resident on Windham Green were Jonathan Huntington and Joshua Elderkin. Among the numerous tavern-keepers scattered over all parts of the town, were James Brewster, David Ripley, John Backus, Eleazer Fitch, Isaac Warner, Benjamin Lathrop and Isaac Parish.

The social life of Windham during this period is represented as exceedingly hilarious and enjoyable. Nearly all the families in town were connected by inter-marriage, and maintained the most friendly and open intercourse. A free and generous hospitality prevailed among all classes. Good cheer abounded. Merry-makings of every description were frequent. The residents of Windham Green were especially noted for love of fun and frolic, bantering and jesting. Traditions of these golden days represent Windham with her two parishes, like Judah and Israel in the days of Solomon—"many as



the sand which is by the sea in multitude, eating and drinking, and making merry."

The chief public interest in Windham between 1750-55, was the grand colonization scheme then brought before the public. That spirit of enterprise, that migratory impulse, which has led the sons of the Pilgrims from Plymouth Rock to the coast of the Pacific, was early manifested in Windham County. As early as 1735, residents of Ashford and Killingly, joined with others from towns in Massachusetts, in petitioning for a township among the Equivalent Lands allowed to Connecticut, and received a grant, afterwards laid out as Town No. 1, Vermont. Windham settlers followed in 1737, asking for a town east of Salisbury, and although their request was refused, many residents from that and other Windham County towns removed with their families to the new towns in Litchfield County. But it was not till 1750, that the spirit of emigration, long smoldering, broke out into open flame. Connecticut's chartered right to a strip of land forty leagues wide, extending southwest across the continent to the Pacific Ocean, had never been yielded. The marvellous richness and beauty of the Susquehanna Valley were already celebrated, and now it was proposed to plant a Colony in this beautiful region, and thus incorporate it into the jurisdiction of Connecticut. The originators of this notable scheme are unknown, but it was soon promulgated and discussed in several Windham County townships, and, early in 1753, thus laid before the General Assembly:—

"To the Honorable Assembly, to be holden at Hartford, second Thursday of May next, the memorial of the subscribers, inhabitants of Farmington, Windham, Canterbury, Plainfield, Voluntown, and in several other towns, all of Connecticut Colony, humbly sheweth: That, whereas, there is a large quantity of land lying upon a river called Susquehanna, and also at a place called Quiwaumuck, and that there is no English inhabitant that lives on said land, nor near thereunto, and the same lies about seventy miles west of Dielewey River, and, as we suppose, within the charter of the Colony of Connecticut, and that there is a number of Indians that live on or near the place of land aforesaid, who lay claim to the same, and we, the subscribers, to the number of one hundred persons, who are very desirous to go and inhabit the aforesaid land, and at the place aforesaid, provided that we can obtain a quiet or quit-claim of the Honorable Assembly, of a tract of land lying at the place aforesaid, and to contain a quantity sixteen miles square, to lie on both sides Susquehanna River, and as the Indians lay claim to the same, we propose to purchase of them their right, so as to be at peace with them; whereupon, we humbly pray, That the Honorable Assembly would grant to us a quit-claim of the aforesaid tract, or so much as the Honorable Assembly shall think best, upon such terms as your Honors shall think reasonable, and in such a way and manner, that in case we cannot hold and enjoy the same by virtue of said grant, yet notwithstanding, the same not to be hurtful or prejudicial on any account to this Colony, and in case we can hold and possess said land, then to be always under the government, and subject to the laws and discipline of this Colony, and, provided, that we, the said subscribers, shall within three years next coming lay the same out in equal proportion, and settle upon the

same, as also purchase the right of the Natives as aforesaid, or in some other way grant us the land aforesaid, as your Honors shall think best, as we, in duty bound, shall ever pray.

March 29, 1753.

Henry Linkon.  
Jedidiah Darbe.  
Cyprian Stevens.  
David Stevens.  
Phinehas Tracy.  
John Pellet.  
Joseph Parks.  
Isaac Gallup.  
Thomas Douglas.  
Nathan Parke.  
Robert Parke.  
Benjamin Crary.  
George Crary.  
John Kinne.  
Moses Kinne.  
Henry Hart.  
Oliver Crary.  
Gideon Keenay.  
Nathan Keenay.  
Stephen Keenay.  
Thomas Keenay.  
Peter Miller.  
George Gordon.  
Samuel Gordon.  
Matthew Patrick, Sen. and Jun.  
Jacob Patrick.  
Samuel Kasson.  
Archibald Kasson.  
Jeremiah Kinne.  
Samuel Smith.  
Francis Smith, 3d.  
James Montgomery. •  
Thomas Cole.  
Peter Ayers.  
Noah Briggs.  
Patrick Fay.  
Ebenezer Robinson.  
Ezekiel Prince.  
Thomas Parke, Sen. and Jun.  
Nathan Parke.  
Joseph Parke.  
John Pike.  
Benjamin Parke.  
Robert Dixon, 3d.  
William Cady.  
Jabez Fitch.  
John Keigwin.

James Keigwin.  
Stephen Stoyell.  
John Smith, Jun.  
Hugh Kennedy, Jun.  
John Dorrence.  
Josiah Russel.  
Jonas Shepard.  
Lemuel Deane.  
Ezra Spalding.  
John Stevens.  
Asa Parke.  
Nehemiah Parke.  
Christopher Crary.  
John Parke.  
William Parke.  
David Waters.  
John Spalding.  
David Downing.  
Stephen Rhodes.  
William Gallup.  
Adam Kasson.  
John Smith, 2d.  
Benjamin Smith.  
William Church.  
Elijah Francis.  
Ephras Andrus.  
Ebenezer Smith, Jun.  
Stephen Kellog.  
Samuel Thomas.  
Josiah Cortis.  
William Andrews.  
Eliphalet Whiting.  
Solomon Stoddard.  
Ichabod Welles.  
Timothy More.  
Jonathan Pettibone.  
John Pellet.  
Joshua Whitney. <  
Nath. Babcock. <  
Eleazer Spalding.  
Robert Jameson.  
Phinehas Green.  
Amos Spalding.  
Robert Hunter.  
Robert Gordon.  
Thomas Stewart.

Although no formal answer was given to this petition, the subscribers received sufficient encouragement to go on with their efforts. A large number of the memorialists were from Voluntown and the less prominent towns, but now Windham entered into the scheme with great avidity, and her most prominent men lent their influence for its promotion. A meeting for forming a company for the colonization of the Susquehanna Valley, was held in Windham, July 18, 1753. A large number of persons was present, and very great enthusiasm manifested. Articles

of agreement were presented and adopted, receiving more than two hundred and fifty signatures. Jonathan Skinner, Jabez Fitch, Eliphalet Dyer, John Smith and Captain Robert Dixon, were appointed a committee "to repair to the place on said river, view said land and purchase right of natives, receive, prepare, lay out and convey said land"—the company agreeing that each subscriber should pay to the committee, "two Spanish milled dollars before said committee, thus going to settle, go out on said business; and on their return, upon their rendering their accounts, pay each one's proportion of expense." They were further instructed to set out immediately, or before September 1; to secure a tract of land twenty miles one way and ten another, and not expend over a thousand pounds. Captain John Fitch, Jedediah Elderkin and Samuel Gray were also appointed "to hold the original subscriptions made at this time, receive the money, and deliver the same to the committee appointed to go on said affair to the said Susquehanna, take their receipts therefor, and when said committee shall return, take and examine their accounts." Representatives of almost every family in Windham, Plainfield and Voluntown, David Nevins of Canterbury, John Hubbard and Israel Putnam of Brooklyn Parish, and John Stevens, Ebenezer Larned and Isaac Lee of Killingly, were among these original subscribers. A few of these signers were from Colchester and adjacent towns, but much the larger proportion was from Windham County.

Interest in this attractive enterprise was not long confined to the towns where it was initiated. Applications for admission to the Company soon came from every corner of Connecticut. At an informal meeting held in Colchester, August 28, William Whiting and Lieutenant Woodward were empowered to take subscriptions in that vicinity. At a meeting in Canterbury, September 6, Samuel Gray was chosen clerk, and it was agreed that the payment of one dollar should entitle a signer to half a right. An important meeting was held in Windham, January 4, 1754, when it was agreed to admit forty persons, each, from New Haven, Fairfield and Litchfield Counties; thirty, from Hartford County; twenty from New London, and ten more from Windham. The price of a share was now raised to four dollars. Timothy Woodbridge was granted a share as a free donation, and appointed an agent for the Company for the Susquehanna Purchase; to order, act and transact the whole affair of said purchase with the chiefs of the Indians that are the native proprietors of the land proposed to be purchased. Notwithstanding the rise in the value of shares, so great was the number of applications that, in May, it was voted, That five hundred more should be admitted to the Company at five dollars a share, doubling the number allowed from each

county. Members were now admitted from the more distant Windham County towns—John Grosvenor from Pomfret, Colonels William and Thomas Chandler from Woodstock, and many others. The most keen sighted and public-spirited men were ready to aid and promote this scheme of colonization. Offering the promise of romantic and stirring adventure, Colonial aggrandizement and pecuniary profit, it was no marvel that it gained so strong a hold upon popular favor.

During the summer, negotiations were successfully conducted between representatives of the Six Nations, which claimed the land, and Messrs. Woodbridge and Dyer on behalf of the Company, and a deed secured of a tract of land called Quiwaunnuck or Wyoming, in the Susquehanna Valley. The succeeding meeting of the Susquehanna Company was held in Hartford, November 27, 1754. The project now had far outgrown county limits and embraced the whole Commonwealth. Eliphalet Dyer officiated as moderator; Samuel Gray as clerk. George Wyllis, Esq., was chosen treasurer. Phinehas Lyman, George Wyllis, Daniel Edwards and Eliphalet Dyer were appointed a committee, to manage, transact and do everything in the name and behalf of the Susquehanna Company, in order to prefer the circumstances of the purchase lately made of the Indians, and all proper exhibits, to lay before his Majesty for his grant and confirmation. It was voted, to petition the Assembly for incorporation; that two dollars more be raised on every old share and one dollar on half a share, to be improved in completing the purchase, and that the clerk be a receiver, and that he transmit the same into the hands of the treasurer. One thousand dollars were ordered to be immediately transmitted to Colonel John Henry Lyddas of Albany, in order to complete the purchase, in compliance with the agreement of the agents, and more if necessary. Eight hundred "wholesome persons" were now allowed in the company, new subscribers paying nine dollars per share. Samuel Tolcott of Hartford, Isaac Tracy of Norwich, Samuel Gray of Windham, Oliver Wolcott of Litchfield, Samuel Bishop of New Haven and Joseph Wakeman of Fairfield, were intrusted with the management of affairs in their respective counties.

In May, 1755, an address was prepared and presented to the Assembly, asking its countenance and protection in erecting a new colony, with liberty to employ suitable persons to erect monuments at the corners of the land already purchased, procure and lay out a township, and to build and erect sufficient fortifications, a grist-mill and sawmill. In response to these requests, the Assembly resolved:—

"That they are of opinion that the peaceable and orderly erecting and carrying on some new and well-regulated colony or plantation in the lands above-said would greatly tend to fix and secure such Indian nations in allegiance to his Majesty and friendship with his subjects, and accordingly hereby manifest



their ready acquiescence therein, if it should be his Majesty's royal pleasure to grant said lands to said petitioners, and thereon erect or settle a new colony in such form and under such regulations as might be consistent with his royal wisdom, and also take leave humbly to recommend the said petitioners to his royal favor in the premises."

As incorporation and confirmation were beyond the province of the Government of Connecticut, the Company was forced to await the issue of an appeal to the Crown. The culmination of the long-standing difficulties between England and France prevented further action at this period. A protracted war was at hand. Hostilities had already commenced, and the Susquehanna Company was forced to defer occupation of their Purchase till a more favorable season.

## IX.

### WINDHAM'S FROG FRIGHT. FRENCH AND INDIAN WAR. STATISTICAL SUMMARY.

THE rival claims of France and England to American territory had involved the Colonies from the outset in frequent war and bloodshed. The final controversy, extending from 1754 to 1760, cost them many lives, much treasure and great suffering. The breaking out of this War was at the darkest period of Windham's history. Religious dissensions had divided and weakened her churches, and malignant distempers decimated and desolated her families. Six of her ablest ministers and many prominent public men had been stricken down. Children had died in great numbers, so that scarce a household was left unbroken. In those mournful days, when many hearts "were trembling at the manifest judgments of God," a rumor of impending war deepened the gloom. Tales of Indian atrocities and butcheries had been handed down from generation to generation. War with France was a war with ferocious savages, incited and guided by skilled brains and backed by all the resources of civilization. The colonization scheme by which many had hoped to escape difficulties and discouragements and begin life anew under more favorable auspices, was likely to be blighted or deferred. Her citizens would be called out to engage in this deadly carnage, and her homes and villages left exposed to the incursions of murderous savages. These gloomy prospects filled many hearts with anxious forebodings and subjected Windham to that ludicrous panic more widely known than any event in her history; to magnifying an uproar in her Frog Pond into the clamor of an approaching army.

This memorable incident occurred in June, 1754. Though war was not formally declared, hostilities had begun. A Virginia regiment, led

by Colonel George Washington, was already in the field, laboring to expel the French from possessions claimed by the Ohio Company. Delegates from many of the Colonies were in session at Albany, endeavoring to concert a scheme of common defence. The public mind was disturbed and apprehensive. Windham's prominence in the recently-formed Susquehanna Company gave her especial cause for anxiety. This attempt to rescue from the Indians a large tract of land bordering on the disputed territory might have aroused suspicion and hostility, and exposed them to the vengeance of the enemy. The feverish enthusiasm with which they had hailed that attractive scheme gave place to doubts and misgivings, and premonitory croakings were heard on every side. Thus troubled and perturbed, the residents of Windham Green were aroused from their slumbers one sultry summer night by sounds wholly unlike anything ever before heard or reported even by the oldest inhabitant. Mr. White's negro-man, returning from some nocturnal rendezvous, was the first to hear these sounds and give the alarm to his master and the neighbors. Rushing out from their beds, they listened with horror and amazement. A din, a roar, an indescribable hubbub and tumult seemed to fill the Heavens and shake the earth beneath their feet. The night was still, cloudy, and intensely dark. Sky, village and surrounding country were shrouded in thickest blackness, and thus the terrified listeners were thrown wholly upon conjecture and imagination. Some feared that the Day of Judgment was at hand, and that these unearthly sounds were but the prelude to the Trump of Doom. Others seized upon the more natural but scarcely less appalling explanation, that an army of French and Indians were marching upon the devoted village. Distinct articulations, detected amid the general Babel, made this conjecture more probable, and ere long the name of Windham's most honored citizen, most prominently connected with the Susquehanna Purchase, was clearly eliminated. "We'll have Colonel Dyer," "We'll have Colonel Dyer," was vociferated in deep, guttural tones. "Elderkin too," "Elderkin too," responded a shrill tenor. Yes! both these noble young men were demanded by the insatiate savages. The words "Teté," "Teté," next detected, inspired some hope. It was possible that even then a treaty might be effected. Thus in fear, terror, and conjecture passed the night—the astounding clamor continuing till the breaking of day. That any terrified Windhamite was so demented as to sally out with gun and pitchfork to meet an army of famished frogs *en route* for the Willimantic, is extremely doubtful.

The morning brought a solution of the mystery from families near the mill-pond. Windham's own amphibious population had broken her peace and made all the disturbance. The family of Mr. Follet, who

owned the mill-privilege and lived adjacent, were awakened by a most extraordinary clamor among the frogs. They filled the air with cries of distress described by the hearers as continuous and thunderlike, making their beds shake under them. Those who went to the pond found the frogs in great apparent agitation and commotion, but from the extreme darkness of the night could see nothing of what was passing. In the morning, many dead frogs were found about the pond, yet without any visible wounds or marks of violence. There was no evidence that they had been engaged in battle. Some mysterious malarial malady, some deadly épizootic, had probably broken out among them and caused the outcries and havoc. The report of their attempted migration in search of water is positively denied by trustworthy witnesses. There had been no drought, and the pond was abundantly supplied with water, being fed by a never-failing stream.

The mortification of the Windham people upon this unexpected and humiliating revelation is quite beyond the power of description :—

“Some were well pleased, and some were mad;  
Some turned it off with laughter;  
And some would never hear a word  
About the thing, thereafter.  
Some vowed that if the De'il, himself,  
Should come, they would not flee him,  
And if a frog they ever met,  
Pretended not to see him.”

No people were so fond of playing jokes upon others as these same residents of Windham Green, and now that the joke was turned upon them, no mercy was shown them. Those of their fellow townsmen who had not been victimized overwhelmed them with banter and ridicule. The tragic alarm was made the most comical of farces. The story flew all over the County with innumerable additions and exaggerations—a bit of choice fun, pleasantly enlivening the cares and anxieties of that mournful period. Rev. Mr. Stiles of Woodstock, forgetting his losses and conflicts, thus playfully descants upon the affair to his nephew :—

“WOODSTOCK, *July 9, 1754.*

“If the late tragical tidings from Windham deserve credit, as doubtless they do, it will then concern the gentlemen of your Jurispridian order to be fortified against the dreadful croaks of Tauranean Legions; Legions, terrible as the very wreck of matter and the crush of worlds. Antiquity relates that the elephant fears the mouse; a hero trembles at the crowing of a cock—but pray whence is it that the croaking of a bull-frog should so Belthazzarize a lawyer? How Dyerful ye alarm made by these audacious long-winded croakers :

‘Things unattempted yet in prose or rhyme,  
Tauranean terrors or Chimeras Dyer.’

I hope, sir, from the Dyerful reports from the Frog Pond, you'll gain some instruction, as well as from the report of my Lord Cook.”

Nor was the report of the Windham panic confined to its own

County. Even without the aid of newspapers and pictorial illustrations, it was borne to every part of the land. It was sung in song and ballad; it was related in histories; it served as a standing joke in all circles and seasons. Few incidents occurring in America have been so widely circulated. Let a son of Windham penetrate to the uttermost parts of the Earth, he would find that the story of the Frog-fright had preceded him. The Windham Bull-frogs have achieved a world-wide reputation, and with Rome's goose, Putnam's wolf and a few other favored animals, will ever hold a place in popular memory and favor.

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The War, so gloomily foreboded, broke out in earnest in 1755. Four important expeditions were planned by the English. In August, a regiment was raised in eastern Connecticut, to assist in the reduction of Crown Point, assigned to Sir William Johnson. Eliphalet Dyer was appointed its lieutenant-colonel. Each Windham County town was ordered to furnish its proportion of men. John Grosvenor was captain of the company in Pomfret, with Nehemiah Tyler for first and Israel Putnam for second lieutenants. Notwithstanding the difficulties and dangers of the service, the requisite recruits were speedily secured. A strong military spirit pervaded the towns, deepened by a sense of religious and patriotic obligation, and all were ready to bear their part of the public burdens. The spirit with which Windham County engaged in this dreaded war, is manifested in the following votes passed in Ashford. At a church-meeting, September 9, 1755,

"Voted, to keep a day of fasting and prayer one day in a month to Almighty God, in behalf of our friends that are gone and going to defend our land against an encroaching foe; that they may be preserved and have success."

On the same day, it was voted in town-meeting:—

"That the town do concur with the church in keeping a day of fasting once a month."

This regiment at once joined the forces at Lake George and did good service during the remainder of the campaign. Putnam's uncommon daring, and fitness for military exploits, were at once shown and recognized. Associating himself with a company of Rangers, under command of Captain Robert Rogers, he engaged with great ardor and boldness in most exciting and hazardous service. The official report of his first thirty days' service is a series of hairbreadth escapes and thrilling adventures. Alone, or with a single companion, he passed night after night in reconnoissances—creeping under bushes into encampments of hundreds of hostile Indians, and lying all night within reach of their muskets, or venturing within a rod of the sentry at



Crown Point, and having his blanket shot through in divers places in retreating from his perilous position.

Another son of Windham County distinguished himself greatly during this first campaign. Nathan Whiting, youngest son of Rev. Samuel Whiting of Windham, was graduated at Yale College in 1743, and had established himself in business in New Haven. Appointed lieutenant-colonel of the First Connecticut regiment, he had assisted in establishing and manning Fort Edward, and then accompanied the main body of the army fourteen miles westward to the south part of Lake George, where they prepared to construct another fortification, but before their intrenchments were completed, they learned that Baron Dieskau, with a strong force, was on his way to Fort Edward, where a great part of their ammunition and provisions was deposited. A detachment of twelve hundred men was at once dispatched—September 8—under Colonel Ephraim Williams of Massachusetts, to intercept this force, and relieve the Fort if possible, but within three miles of the camp they were themselves attacked by the whole body of the French and routed with great slaughter. Colonel Williams, Hendrick, the Mohawk chieftain, Major Ashley and several other officers, were slain at the first onset. The soldiers fled in great confusion, but were rallied with much skill and gallantry by Lieutenant-Colonel Whiting, then left in command, who succeeded in leading them back to the camp in good order, and engaged with great spirit in the subsequent battle, wherein the French were routed and General Dieskau wounded and taken prisoner. "For his extraordinary services" upon this and other occasions, a reward was granted him by the Assembly of Connecticut. His brothers William and Samuel Whiting, also served as colonels during this war.

After the battle of Lake George, active operations were suspended for the winter. Rev. Samuel Chandler of Gloucester, chaplain of one of the regiments, furnishes the following array of reasons for not proceeding on the expedition against Crown Point:—"1. Water in river rising. 2. Bad roads. 3. Wagoners worn out. 4. Batteaux shot and shelled at Fort Edward. 5. No provender for horses to haul them. 6. Soldiers dispirited. 7. Many sick. 8. No Mohawks to join them. 9. Scant provisions. 10. Great Sea in the Lake."

The failure of the several projected expeditions, and the overwhelming defeat of Braddock, greatly depressed the Colonists. A severe earthquake shock felt in all parts of the country, heightened the general feeling of uncertainty and alarm. This occurred November 18, at about four in the morning. The air was clear and calm, moon shining as pleasant as ever was seen at the time, but the sea roaring at the shore with such a noise as hardly ever was known. The first shock lasted about one and a half minutes and was succeeded by a second still more

terrible. Mr. Stiles of Woodstock reports, "the terra-motus in this place very severe, lasting about two minutes—earth violently shaken." This unusual phenomenon was considered very ominous, betokening further reverses and disasters. Alarming sickness and mortality already prevailed among the soldiers. One of the first victims of the war was the beloved young Separate minister, Thomas Stevens, dying in his father's house on Thanksgiving Day of disease contracted while serving as chaplain.

The Windham County Association, at its meeting early in 1756, appointed and recommended a day of prayer, to be observed monthly in all the churches, "on account of frequent and amazing earthquakes; strange, unusual and distressing war; awful growth and spread of vice, infidelity and iniquity, *i. e.*, some hour of the afternoon of the last Thursday in every month, leaving it discretionary with the ministers whether to spend the whole time in prayer only, or give the people a sermon suitable to the occasion."

These untoward events and gloomy forebodings did not discourage enlistment and preparations for farther action. In November, Israel Putnam received a commission as captain, and was ordered to raise a company of men to hold possession of Fort Edward during the ensuing winter. Many young men in Pomfret and adjacent towns were eager to serve under so spirited and popular a leader, and soon the ranks were filled, as follows:—Israel Putnam, captain; Nathaniel Porter and Henry Chapin, lieutenants; Henry Pearson, Peter Leavens, Peleg Sunderland and William Manning, sergeants; David Cleveland, Nathan Hale, David Whitmore, Thomas Lyon, corporals; Nathan Bacon, drummer; Isaac Dean, clerk; Soldiers—Robert Austin, Matthew Davis, Daniel Isham, Micajah Torrey, Eliphalet Carpenter, Samuel White, Littlefield Nash, Jeremiah Jackson, Peter Bowen, Timothy Harrington, Giles Harris, Ebenezer Cary, John Austin, Aaron Dewey, John Waters, Eli Lewis, Samuel Horton, Ezekiel White, Robert Newell, Samuel Webb, Gideon Webb, Solomon Mack, Zaccheus Crow, Roger Crow, Charles Biles, Edward Tryon, Edad Parson, Stephen Pease, Wareham Pease, Thomas Brigdon, James Hartford, Thomas Eddy, George Gregory, John Metcalf, John Philips, John Hutchinson, Benjamin Shipman. The forces under Johnson, during this winter of 1755-56, remained in their quarters at Fort Edward, strengthening this fort, completing and equipping Fort William Henry at the southwestern extremity of Lake George, and constructing a more commodious road between these important positions. Putnam's company was chiefly occupied with the congenial service of scouting and ranging, carrying on a sharp guerrilla warfare with the bands of hostile savages which infested this region. So efficient was this service that, in May, Captain

Putnam received from the General Assembly a grant of fifty Spanish milled dollars in recognition of his "extraordinary services and good conduct in ranging and scouting the winter past for the annoyance of the enemy near Crown Point, and discovery of their motions."

In June, 1756, war against France was formally declared by Great Britain. Previous hostilities and rencontres had been merely preliminary to the great conflict. Connecticut now ordered her first census to be taken and made preparation to bear her part in the coming struggle. New regiments were raised to assist in the reduction of Crown Point, but through the incompetency and blunders of the commanding officers nothing was accomplished in this and the following year. The fort at Oswego was captured by the French in 1756; Fort William Henry was taken by them in 1757, after a gallant defence of six days. Many soldiers were taken prisoners, many butchered in cold blood by the Indians.

Through these gloomy years, Windham bore her part with unshaken courage and fidelity, but it is impossible to form an accurate estimate of the aid furnished by her. The towns kept no records of the soldiers sent out by them, and in the general lists the names of Windham County men cannot be positively identified, but there is abundant evidence that her quota was never lacking. The names of many sons of her leading families appear among the officers and soldiers. The Paysons, who had fought so gallantly in former wars, again took the field. John and Nathan Payson, William and Samuel Whiting, Eleazer Fitch, John Grosvenor, Ebenezer Williams, Aaron Cleveland of Canterbury, Edward Marcy of Ashford, Ezekiel Pierce and Benjamin Lee of Plainfield, Robert Durkee of Canada Parish, David Holmes of Woodstock, Benjamin Crary and John Keigwin of Voluntown, John Leavens and Samuel Fairbanks of Killingly, Samuel Larned of Thompson Parish, Joseph Paine of Pomfret are found among the captains. Captain Eleazer Fitch's company comprised the following men, mostly from Windham:—James Tracy and Ezekiel Fitch, lieutenants; Elijah Simons, Asa Richardson, sergeants; Nathan Lilly, Peter Bowditch, William Parish, corporals; Edward Bibbins, Nathaniel Ripley, Darius Waterman, Joseph Farnum, Asa Stevens, Isaac Canada, Aaron Eaton, Henry Brewster, Jonathan Knight, Benjamin Holden, Josiah Fuller, Simon Cady, Stephen Baker, Caleb Austin, George Parker, John Watson, Michael Watson, David Woodworth, Daniel Moulton, James Hide, George Dunham, Joseph Truesdell, Jonathan Canada, Daniel Squier, Moses Sparks, Phinehas Manning, Benjamin Cary, Cyrus Richards, Joshua Hebard, Samuel Morris, William Gordon, Benjamin Paul, Roger Crary, Enos Bartholomew, privates. Putnam's second company was mostly made up from Plainfield and Voluntown; Thomas Gallup

serving as lieutenant, George Crery as sergeant, Ebenezer Davis and David Shepard as corporals, and Robert Dixon, Benjamin Parks, Elijah Cady, Ezekiel Whiting, James Ashley and Thomas Rudd as soldiers. Upon the alarm following the capture of Fort William Henry by Montcalm, four volunteer companies marched from Windham County commanded by Abner Baker, Ashford; John Carpenter, Woodstock; Isaac Coit, Plainfield; John Grosvenor, Pomfret. These volunteers were mostly men advanced in life, the fathers of the towns, showing that most of the young men were already in service. Captain Carpenter led from Woodstock and Thompson.—Sergeants Josiah Child, William Manning and Stephen Marcy, Lieutenant Diah Johnson, Corporals Timothy Perrin and Jonathan Knapp; privates, Isaac Stone, Benjamin Joslin, Zebediah Sabin, Elisha Marcy, Daniel Corbin, Jesse Carpenter, Benjamin Bacon, Joseph Bishop, Thomas Fox, Abraham Frizzel, Abijah Griggs, Abel Hammond, Jeremiah Tucker, Abner Darling, Abijah Nichols, Nath. Ormsbee, Joseph Perry, Joseph Peake, Joseph Frizzel, David Barret, Henry Lyon, Daniel Bacon, Uriah Marcy, George Lyon, Jonathan Nelson, Ephraim Peake, Joseph Bugbee, Benjamin Deming, Elisha Child, Ezra Child, Nathaniel Ellithorp, Luke Upham, Nathaniel Saunders, Elnathan Walker, Eliphalet Goodell, Samuel Dodge, Ezra Abbe, Benjamin and Zebulon Marcy, Elisha Goodell, Daniel Allard, Increase Child, Benjamin Dana, Samuel, Stephen and Daniel Lyon, Joseph Town, Joseph Newell, Nathan Bixby, Peter Leavens, William Marsh, Noah and John Barrows, Thomas Shapley and Calvin Torrey. Captain Grosvenor's company comprised Ebenezer Holbrook and John Cotton, lieutenants; Joseph Robbins, Moses Earl, Joseph Johnson and Josiah Sabin, sergeants; Josiah Brown, Jonathan Fisk, Benoni Cutler and Jonathan Coy, corporals; Nathaniel Stowell, clerk; Elijah Sharpe, Joseph Sumner, Elijah Chandler, James Williams, — Coy, — Danielson, Simeon Lee, Jonathan Jeffards, Jonathan Saunders, James Holmes, Nathaniel Goodell, William Blackmar, Nathaniel Barnes, Joseph Collier, John Patton, James Anderson, Thomas Gould, Joseph Grover, Joseph Sprague, Elijah Cady, Stephen Brown, Benjamin Tucker, Benjamin Craft, Jacob Whitmore, Ebenezer Covill, Jonathan Cutler, Hyde, Hubbard, Goodell, Aldrich and Alton. These lists give but a small proportion of the officers and men engaged in the French and Indian War. Demanding recruits through many consecutive years, there was probably scarcely a family in Windham County unrepresented. Not only did she furnish all the men asked by her own Government, but some for her neighbors,—Darius Sessions having removed to Providence, raising a company of recruits in Pomfret and Abington to serve for Rhode Island.

A change in the British Ministry in 1758, inaugurated a new era in



the conduct of the War. Pitt, as prime minister, infused new life and spirit into the army. In response to his appeal to the governors of the Colonies, Connecticut volunteered to send five thousand effective men into the field. Four regiments were promptly ordered, each comprising twelve companies. A bounty of four pounds was offered to each volunteer. Eliphalet Dyer was now appointed colonel; Nathan Payson, lieutenant-colonel; Israel Putnam, major; Elisha Lord of Abington, surgeon. It is impossible to follow the fortunes of the War through the subsequent brilliant campaigns, which more than atoned for previous defeats and disasters. In 1758, Louisburg, Fort Du Quesne and Fort Frontenac were taken by the English; in 1759, Ticonderoga, Crown Point, Niagara and Quebec surrendered, and on September 6, 1760, Montreal, Detroit and all remaining French possessions within Canada, were relinquished to Great Britain. Windham County soldiers participated in these various achievements and shared the laurels of victory. The exploits and adventures of Putnam are too well known to be repeated. The fabulous deeds ascribed to heroes of antiquity are scarcely more marvelous than those detailed by his biographer, yet they are mainly confirmed by official reports. His hearty frankness and good nature, together with his great personal daring, made him a favorite among all ranks of the army—even the polished British officers delighting in the rough “Captain Wolf,” as they most frequently called him. In 1759, he was promoted to the rank of lieutenant-colonel.

Many other Windham County soldiers distinguished themselves in this War, and gained a military experience fitting them for still more notable achievements in the Revolutionary struggle. Robert Durkee, afterwards of Wyoming, was noted for courage and bravery, and aided Putnam in some of his most brilliant exploits. Thomas Knowlton of Ashford enlisted under Captain Durkee at the age of fifteen, and continued in service throughout the War, rising successively to the rank of lieutenant. His brother Daniel also served in several campaigns, so brave a man, according to Putnam, “that he could order him into a loaded cannon.” Many fought bravely “whose memorial has perished with them.” Many fell victims to disease. Hezekiah Buswell died in the camp at Lake George; James Hide in the camp at Fort Edward, both of Canterbury. Many more suffered the horrors of captivity. Frederick Curtis of Canterbury thus tells his story:—

“Enlisted under Col. Eleazer Fitch. Was numbered with two hundred and thirty men, Sept. 10, 1759, to go on an expedition under Rogers to Indian-town, St. Francis; arrived Oct. 1, beset the town, cut off the inhabitants and laid all in ashes, and for safety on the return divided into parties of eight. Enfeebled by travel, and five days destitute of provisions save mushrooms and beech leaves, sat down to rest and were surprised by a party of Indians, who had followed us, and were taken prisoners. Were stripped and bound and

tied to trees except Bullard, who was stabbed with a knife and killed. Hewett and Lee escaped, and the rest were carried back in canoes to St. Francis. Never saw his companions again except Jones. Those that got there before him were killed, and the Indians demanded that he should be killed outright, but his Indian master delayed till morning. During the night, with the aid of a Dutch prisoner, he prevailed on an Indian to carry him off in a canoe and delivered himself up a prisoner to the French, and after suffering in a prison-ship till the middle of June, he came with a flag to Montreal and was exchanged. The Indians took his gun and blankets, and his clothes were scattered, lost and spoiled."

Ebenezer Dodge of Woodstock, enlisted under Captain Payson, kept garrison at Fort Edward, was taken prisoner and carried to Canada, where, after suffering cruel barbarities, he was put to live with an Indian, till sold to the French and finally redeemed and brought home. Prince Gardner, a negro under Captain Putnam, was taken prisoner and sold as a slave in Montreal. James Wilson of Thompson, was also taken prisoner, and retained in captivity so long that all his friends supposed him dead, but he effected his escape and returned to his wife and family just in time to avoid the fate of Enoch Arden.

The sufferings of the soldiers, great as they were, were scarcely less than those of their families at home, not only from suspense and anxiety but from actual privation and destitution. Very little definite knowledge can, however, be gained. Town records during this period are very meagre and scanty, newspapers were almost unknown, and family traditions are dim and unreliable. We only know that the currency was greatly demoralized; that provisions and clothing were scarce, and all the resources of the country very limited. It is reported by trustworthy authority that the family of Ensign Samuel Perrin of Pomfret, occupying a noble farm on the Quinebaug, were mainly supported during one winter of his absence by a *crop of carrots* raised by the hand of Mrs. Perrin,—and if a family of such means and position could be reduced to such straits, how great must have been the privations and sufferings of those less favored! The period embracing the French and Indian War was one of clouds and thick darkness; sickness and heavy losses; distressing rumors and harrowing realities—and its successful termination was hailed with universal joy and thanksgiving throughout all the Colonies.

The first census of Connecticut was taken in 1756, at which time Windham County numbered the following inhabitants:—

	Whites.	Blacks.
Ashford . . . . .	1,245	—
Canterbury . . . . .	1,240	20
Killingly . . . . .	2,100	—
Plainfield . . . . .	1,751	49
Pomfret . . . . .	1,677	50
Voluntown . . . . .	1,029	19
Windham . . . . .	2,406	40
Woodstock . . . . .	1,336	30
Coventry . . . . .	1,617	18
Lebanon . . . . .	3,171	103
Mansfield . . . . .	1,598	16
Union . . . . .	500	—
	—	—
	19,670	345

Taking, from this list the four latter towns, the population of the territory now embraced in Windham County was 12,784 whites, and 208 blacks. These blacks were mostly negroes owned as slaves by the more opulent families. A few Indians held as slaves were probably included among them. Apparently, the list is not complete, as a few families in Ashford and Killingly are known to have held slaves. These negroes were generally employed as house or body servants and were treated with great favor and indulgence. No instances of cruelty or neglect have been reported, and no complaint against any master has been found on the Court records. Several negroes were owned by Colonel Thomas Dyer; a still larger number occupied Godfrey Malbone's plantation in Mortlake. The Indian residents of Windham County were not enumerated at this time. Though greatly reduced in number, they still occupied their old haunts in several towns. Mohegans still asserted their right to the Quinebaug Country, and exercised the privilege of fishing in the river, cutting down trees and taking whatever they needed.

Windham, with populous Lebanon, Mansfield and Coventry on her west, was now very near the centre of population, but the geographical centre of the county had been changed by the annexation of Woodstock and occupation of Thompson, and already ominous murmurings were heard in this quarter. In 1753, Pomfret appointed John Williams, Benjamin Fasset and Joseph Craft "to meet with gentlemen in respect to having two counties." William Williams, the following year, was chosen to see about altering the county. It was agreed that the distance from the county-seat was a grievance needing abatement,

but no further public action was taken for many years. The rate-list of 1759 gives to Windham County the following estates :—

	£	s.	d.
Ashford . . . . .	12,608	9	6
Canterbury . . . . .	16,333	3	3
Killingly . . . . .	21,837	0	0
Plainfield . . . . .	12,341	19	6
Pomfret . . . . .	20,113	13	3
Voluntown . . . . .	10,311	15	0
Windham . . . . .	26,952	1	4
Woodstock . . . . .	16,500	0	0
	<hr/>		
	136,998	1	10

The unsettled condition of the currency at this date, makes it difficult to know the real value of this estimate, but it was not probably equal to one-third of the amount in silver.

The following list shows the churches and pastors of Windham County in 1760 :—

Ashford . . . . .	Timothy Allen.
Canterbury . . . . .	James Cogswell.
Canterbury Separate . . . . .	Joseph Marshall.
Killingly First . . . . .	Aaron Brown.
Killingly Second (Thompson Parish) . . . . .	Noadiah Russel.
Killingly Third . . . . .	Eden Burroughs.
Killingly Separate . . . . .	Samuel Wadsworth.
Six-Principle Baptist (Thompson Parish) . . . . .	Wightman Jacobs.
Plainfield First . . . . .	David Rowland.
Plainfield Separate . . . . .	Alexander Miller.
Pomfret First . . . . .	Aaron Putnam.
Pomfret Second (Brooklyn Parish) . . . . .	Josiah Whitney. <
Pomfret Third (Abington Parish) . . . . .	David Ripley.
Voluntown . . . . .	Samuel Dorrance.
Windham First . . . . .	Stephen White.
Windham Second (Canada Parish) . . . . .	Samuel Mosely.
Windham Third (Scotland Parish) . . . . .	Ebenezer Devotion.
Brunswick Church (Scotland Parish) . . . . .	John Palmer. <
Woodstock First . . . . .	<i>No pastor.</i>
Woodstock First (North branch) . . . . .	Abel Stiles.
Woodstock Second (New Roxbury Parish) . . . . .	Stephen Williams.

Baptists in Ashford were organized in church fellowship with those of Brimfield.

Schools, though poor and insufficient, were gradually improving. Towns and societies were now divided into districts, each maintaining its own school. High schools and academies were yet unknown.



Those wishing more instruction than the public schools afforded, repaired to the ministers. Mr. Cogswell received pupils into his family. Messrs. Devotion, Stiles, Williams, Whitney and Putnam fitted young men for college and trained them for the ministry. A large number of young men in Windham County availed themselves of these privileges and received a collegiate education. Those whose names have been recovered are here given :—

1719.

John Curtis, Canterbury . . . . . Yale.

1724.

Flint Dwight, Woodstock . . . . . Harvard.

1726.

John Whiting, Windham . . . . . Yale.

1731.

Perley Howe, Killingly . . . . . Harvard.

1733.

Eleazer Wheelock, Windham . . . . . Yale.

1735.

Chester Williams, Pomfret . . . . . Yale.

1736.

Hobart Estabrook, Canterbury . . . . . Yale.

1737.

Darius Sessions, Pomfret . . . . . Yale.

1738.

Seth Dean, Plainfield . . . . . Yale.

1739.

Cyrus Marsh, Plainfield . . . . . Yale.

1740.

Eliphalet Dyer, Windham . . . . . Yale.

1743.

Nathan Whiting, Windham . . . . . Yale.

Eleazer Fitch, Windham . . . . . Yale.

1745.

Thomas Bradbury Chandler, Woodstock . . . . . Yale.

John Cleveland, Canterbury . . . . . Yale.

Nathaniel Draper, Woodstock . . . . . Yale.

1747.

Joshua Chandler, West Woodstock . . . . . Yale.

Nathaniel Huntington, Scotland Parish . . . . . Yale.

## 1748.

Ebenezer Cleveland, Canterbury . . . . .	Yale.
John Shepard, Plainfield . . . . .	Yale.
Thomas Williams, Mortlake . . . . .	Yale.

## 1749.

David Ripley, Scotland Parish . . . . .	Yale.
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## 1750.

Ebenezer Dyer, Canterbury . . . . .	Yale.
Benjamin Palmer, Ashford . . . . .	Yale. <

## 1752.

Josiah Whitney, Plainfield . . . . .	Yale. <
Stephen Holmes, Woodstock . . . . .	Yale.

## 1753.

Gideon Welles, Plainfield . . . . .	Yale.
John Fitch, Windham . . . . .	Yale.

## 1755.

Samuel Cary, Scotland Parish . . . . .	Yale.
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## 1757.

Jeremiah Child, Woodstock. . . . .	Yale.
Nathaniel Webb, Windham . . . . .	Yale.

## 1758.

John Felch, Canterbury . . . . .	Yale.
Jabez Huntington, Windham . . . . .	Yale.

## 1759.

Ebenezer Devotion, Scotland Parish . . . . .	Yale.
Enoch Huntington, Scotland Parish . . . . .	Yale.
John Chandler, Pomfret . . . . .	Yale.
Ebenezer Craft, Pomfret . . . . .	Yale.
Ebenezer Grosvenor, Pomfret . . . . .	Yale.
Ephraim Hide, Pomfret . . . . .	Yale.
Abishai Sabin, Pomfret . . . . .	Yale.
Joseph Sumner, Pomfret . . . . .	Yale.
Ezra Weld, Pomfret . . . . .	Yale.
Joshua Paine, Pomfret . . . . .	Yale.

## 1760.

James Fitch, Windham . . . . .	Yale.
Joseph Dana, Pomfret . . . . .	Yale.

The influence and authority of the clergy were very greatly increased and strengthened by their participation in the education of these young men. The best educated men of the day, leaders in church and state, honored them as their instructors and spiritual fathers. Ministers of

the *town* as well as of the church, they occupied a most prominent and dignified position, and were usually treated with great respect and deference.

Very little progress had yet been made in manufactures. The few articles needed for domestic use were made in the home circle or by neighborhood itinerants. Inventories of estates show a gradual improvement in household furniture and conveniences. The poverty and limited resources of the Colonies, domestic broils and foreign war, had, however, greatly impeded progress, and it is probable that no marked change had been wrought either in the face of the country or the condition and manners of the people, since the organization of the county in 1726. Yet, in the face of many opposing obstacles, much had been accomplished. Settlements had been made, towns founded, institutions established. The Windham of 1760 had already done much that was worthy of record, and laid a good foundation upon which to build in coming generations.

# APPENDIX.

## UNITED ENGLISH LIBRARY IN THE TOWNS OF WOODSTOCK, POMFRET, MORTLAKE, &C.

The following is a catalogue of all the books at first bought by the Rev. Mr. Ebenezer Williams, for the Company aforesaid, with the sterling price as they cost in England, where they were sent for, according to the invoices of John Oswald :—

1740, Sept. 5. The Rev. Mr. WILLIAMS bought of JOHN OSWALD :

		£	s.	d.
2	copies, Lowman on the Revelations . . . . .	0	18	0
1	“ Ridgley's Body of Divinity, 2 vols. . . . .	2	0	0
1	“ Tillotson's sermons, compleat, in 8 vols. . . . .	4	4	0
2	“ Fermin's Real Christian . . . . .	0	8	0
2	“ Jacobs Law Dictionary . . . . .	2	8	0
1	“ Chambers' Dictionary, 2 volumes . . . . .	4	10	0
1	“ Rapiu's History of England, 2 vols. . . . .	2	7	0
1	“ Burnet's History of his own times, 2 vols. . . . .	2	8	0
1	“ Dr. Watts' Sermons, 2 vols. . . . .	0	9	0
1	“ Law's Serious Call to a Devout Life . . . . .	0	2	6
1	“ Doct. Guyse's Sermons, &c., 2 volumes . . . . .	0	8	6
1	“ “ “ on the Spirit . . . . .	0	3	6
1	“ “ “ on ye Person of Christ . . . . .	0	3	6
1	“ “ “ Standing use of ye Scriptures . . . . .	0	3	6
1	“ “ “ Youths' Monitor . . . . .	0	1	6
1	“ Neal's History of ye Puritans, 4 vols. . . . .	1	4	0
1	“ Sermons against Popery, 2 “ . . . . .	0	10	0
1	“ Calmet's Dictionary of the Bible, 3 vols. . . . .	5	0	0
1	“ Sermons at Berry street, 2 “ . . . . .	0	10	0
A	Box . . . . .	0	2	6
		<hr/>		
		28	4	6

1741. Sep. 9, Bought of JOHN OSWALD :—

		\$	s.	d.
2	copies, Law's Serious Call . . . . .	0	5	9
1	“ Bates on the Attributes . . . . .	0	3	0
2	“ Beveridge's Thoughts on Religion . . . . .	0	5	0
2	“ Howe on Family Religion . . . . .	0	5	0
1	“ Clark on the Attributes . . . . .	0	5	0



1	copy,	Dorham's Phisico Theology . . . . .	0	5	0
1	"	" Astro Theology . . . . .	0	4	0
1	"	Ditton on the Resurrection . . . . .	0	5	0
1	"	Saurin's Dissertations . . . . .	0	10	6
1	"	Gentleman Instructed . . . . .	0	5	0
1	"	Patrick's Christian Life . . . . .	0	2	6
1	"	Lady's Lybrary, 3 volumes . . . . .	0	9	0
1	"	Pierce's Vindication of Dissenters . . . . .	0	6	0
1	"	Wilkin's Principles of Nat'l Religion . . . . .	0	4	0
1	"	Jenkins' Reasonableness of Christianity, 2 vols. . . . .	0	9	0
1	"	Bentley's Sermons . . . . .	0	5	0
1	"	Burnet's Pastoral Care . . . . .	0	3	0
1	"	Occasional Papers, 3 volumes . . . . .	0	12	0
1	"	Hoadley's Original and Institution of Civil Government discussed . . . . .	0	4	0
1	"	Hoadley's Measures of Submission, Sermons on the Nature & Kingdom of ye Church of Christ & Answer to a Calumny, &c., bound together . . . . .	0	3	0
1	"	Hoadley's Answer to ye Committee . . . . .	0	2	6
1	"	Locke on Government . . . . .	0	4	0
1	"	" " Education . . . . .	0	2	6
1	"	Lesley's Method with Deists and Jews . . . . .	0	5	0
1	"	Etmullor abridged . . . . .	0	5	0
1	"	Salmon upon Sydenham . . . . .	0	4	0
1	"	Prideaux's Connections, 4 volumes . . . . .	1	0	0
1	"	Horneck's Great Law of Consideration . . . . .	0	4	0
1	"	Steal's Antidote against Distraction . . . . .	0	2	0
2	"	Bland's Military Discipline . . . . .	0	12	0
1	"	Patrick's, Louth's and Whitby's Annotations, 6 vols. . . . .	6	6	0
1	"	Flavel's Works, 2 volumes . . . . .	1	17	0
1	"	Doddridge on ye New Testament, 2 vols. . . . .	1	15	0
1	"	Gordon's Geographical Grammar . . . . .	0	5	0
1	"	Ratcliffe's Treatise of Physick . . . . .	0	5	0
1	"	Quarle's Emblems . . . . .	0	3	0
1	"	Firmin's Real Christian . . . . .	0	3	6
1	"	Watts' Guide to Prayer . . . . .	0	2	0
1	"	" Death and Heaven . . . . .	0	1	6
1	"	" Self murder . . . . .	0	1	6
1	"	" Catechisms Compleat . . . . .	0	2	6
1	"	" Love of God . . . . .	0	2	6
1	"	" Ruin & Recovery of Mankind . . . . .	0	5	0
1	"	" Passions , . . . .	0	2	0
1	"	" Scripture History . . . . .	0	8	0
1	"	" Humble Attempt . . . . .	0	2	0
1	"	" Holiness of times and Places . . . . .	0	2	0
1	"	" World to Come . . . . .	0	4	0
1	"	" Hora Lyrica . . . . .	0	2	6
1	"	" Psalms . . . . .	0	2	0
1	"	" Hymns . . . . .	0	2	0
1	"	" Logic . . . . .	0	4	0
1	"	" Astronomy . . . . .	0	4	0

1	copy, Watts'	Art of Reading . . . . .	0	1	6
1	"	" Miscellaneus . . . . .	0	3	0
1	"	" Strength & Weakness of Human Reason . . . . .	0	2	6
1	"	" Redeemer and Sanctifier . . . . .	0	1	6
1	"	" Caveat against Infidelity, Humility, Essay on Charity Schools, Freedom of will & Self Love— bound together . . . . .	0	6	0
1	"	" Prayers for Children and Divine Songs . . . . .	0	1	6
1	"	" Philosophical Essays . . . . .	0	4	6
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A case . . . . .			0 4 6		

Feb. 19, 1748-9 (books added) :—

			£	s.	d.
1	Copy,	Dr. Coleman on the Parables . . . . .	1	15	0
1	"	Edwards on ye Passions . . . . .	1	8	0
1	"	Dickinson's 1st and 2nd Vindication . . . . .	1	2	0
1	"	Beach's Reply . . . . .	0	10	0
1	"	Flint's Twenty Sermons . . . . .	1	2	0
1	"	Chandler's Doctrines of Grace . . . . .	2	15	0
			<hr/>		
			£8 12 0		

The prices of books purchased in England are stated in English currency; the later purchases in Colonial. A number of these old books, in the case provided for them, are still preserved in Pomfret, together with the quarto volume, "bound with parchment," containing the records of the Society.

## FAMILY HISTORIES.

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It has been impossible in this work to carry out family histories, or even, in many cases, to trace out antecedents with any degree of certainty, so that many Windham families are apparently like Melchisedec, with "neither beginning of days, nor end of life." Thus Peter Aspinwall, one of the original pioneers of Woodstock and first settlers of Killingly, after appearing for more than half a century as the most prominent actor in all public affairs, suddenly and totally disappears from the stage, with no record of his death or the settlement of his estate, and leaving no representative that can be identified. The valuable genealogical papers of the late Mr. Weaver of Willimantic, which would throw much light upon families in the south part of Windham County, are not now attainable. Many Windham families have made no attempt to trace out their genealogies. Others find them jangled in inextricable confusion. Three distinct branches of the Adams stock settled in Canterbury, and one in the south part of Pomfret adjoining, leaving numerous descendants bearing similar patronymics, and marrying and intermarrying until their disentanglement would baffle the most acute and persevering genealogist. A very few families have achieved complete genealogies. The Rev. Abner Morse has included in his valuable work that branch of his family which early settled in Woodstock, and thence sent forth some offshoots whose fame is borne throughout the earth. Dr. George Chandler of Worcester, Mass., and Rev. Benjamin W. Dwight of Clinton, New York, have lately published most elaborate and exhaustive histories of the ancient and honorable families with which they are connected. Full and interesting genealogies have also been compiled of the Danas, Huntingtons, Spaldings, Williamses, and a few other families. Many others are in process of preparation, and will in time be given to the public. It is hoped that more attention will be hereafter given to genealogical investigations, and that every Windham County family may yet be traced to the soil and stock from whence it sprung, but it is a work that will require much time and patience, and can only be accomplished by representatives of those families themselves. The general historian can do little more than to indicate the origin and settlement of families and the connection of prominent members with public and general affairs. Domestic and personal details must be left to the family historian. Should any Windham County family have failed of recognition in these pages, or received less honor than it merited, this omission may be ascribed to some unfortunate oversight, or the impossibility of securing requisite information.

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### ERRATA.

The second Sampson Howe did *not* remove to Killingly upon the death of his father, as stated page 324, but remained in Thompson Parish till his removal to Middletown. It was the *third* Sampson, son of Rev. Perley Howe, who occupied the farm west of Killingly Hill.

Quit-claim deeds were received by Killingly from John Hutchins and his sons Joseph, Wyman, Ezra and Silas, but none from "*John and Joseph Wyman*," as represented page 533.

Page 10, line 20, for "west," read south.

Pages 71-2, for "Peter Crane," read Peter Crosse.

Page 144, line 19, for "often," read after.

Page 167, line 33, for "eastern," read western.

Page 355, line 33, for "1738," read 1748.

Page 382, line 28, for "1743," read 1745.

Page 554, line 19, for "seven," read eight.















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